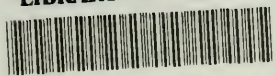


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# COLLECTIONS

OF THE

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## PREFACE.

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The collection of papers left by the late Theodore Foster, now in the possession of the Society, includes many which came from Stephen Hopkins and contains much that is valuable and interesting. Among these papers are the beginnings of a history of the colony, one by Governor Hopkins and the other by Senator Foster, which it has seemed desirable to put into a more accessible and enduring form. The chapters by Hopkins were published by the Massachusetts Historical Society in Vol. IX, 2d series, of their Collections, but it has been thought best to reproduce them here in connection with Foster's design to carry them on. These papers have been carefully edited by Mr. William E. Foster, Librarian of the Providence Public Library, to which he has added a sketch of the life of Theodore Foster. While, as a rule, the collections of the society are not intended to include biographies, except incidentally, yet this one is so comprehensive in research and so illustrates and supplements the papers themselves, that it was deemed by the committee to give completeness to the "Early attempts at Rhode Island History."

The other papers in this volume are selected from those which had been read before the society within a few years prior to the time of making up the contents and which were then available. Of this class of papers some are published elsewhere and some are retained by the authors. Several still remain, however, which, it is hoped will be annotated and prepared for the press in due time.

The thanks of the society are due to each of the gentlemen whose papers appear in this book; not only for their interesting contributions to local history but also for their kindness and trouble in revising their respective papers for publication.

The committee are under especial obligation to Mr. William E. Foster for his valuable assistance in the preparation of the volume.

JOHN H. STINESS, } *Committee*  
JOHN L. LINCOLN, } *on*  
THOMAS VERNON, } *Publications.*



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## EARLY ATTEMPTS AT RHODE ISLAND HISTORY.

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EDITED, WITH NOTES AND HISTORICAL MEMORANDA,

BY WILLIAM E. FOSTER.

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- I. PREFACE.
- II. AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE PLANTING AND GROWTH OF PROVIDENCE. By Stephen Hopkins.
- III. MATERIALS FOR A HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND. Collected by Theodore Foster.
- IV. APPENDIX.
  - I. The sentence of expulsion.
  - II. The principle of civil and religious separation, as held by Roger Williams.
  - III. The original records of the town of Providence.
- V. SKETCH OF THE LIFE AND SERVICES OF THEODORE FOSTER.



## PREFACE.

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Small as it is in territory, the State of Rhode Island has a local and historical literature of no slight extent<sup>1</sup> and of no small importance. The works, however, which have aimed to present a connected view of the history of the whole colonial and State development, are comparatively few. Mr. Arnold, in the preface to his invaluable "History of Rhode Island," (published in 1859,)<sup>2</sup> thus refers to some of them :

"The first was by Governor Stephen Hopkins, one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, who, in 1765,<sup>3</sup> commenced to publish 'An historical account [of the planting and growth] of Providence,' since reprinted in the second series of Massachusetts Historical Collections, volume ix. Only one chapter<sup>4</sup> was completed when the struggle for independence interrupted the work, which was never resumed.<sup>5</sup>

The second was by Hon. Theodore Foster, a senator in congress from Rhode Island, who collected a large number of origi-

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(1) In 1864 the titles of about 1,000 works relating to Rhode Island were included in the "Bibliography of Rhode Island," by Hon. John R. Bartlett. Nearly three times the number might be furnished from the valuable special collection of Rhode Island literature, gathered by Sidney S. Rider.

(2) Volume I was published in 1859, and volume II in the following year. The two together cover the period from 1636 to 1790. The material was chiefly gathered between 1840 and 1859.

(3) Before this, however, in 1762, (in the number of the *Providence Gazette* dated Oct. 20,) the earlier portion of this history had appeared.

(4) Governor Hopkins did not divide his work into chapters. The fragment which he published comprised matter printed in seven numbers of the *Gazette*, and covered the period from 1636 to 1663, only.

(5) Knowing that he would be unable to complete the work, he requested Mr. Theodore Foster to undertake it, and placed in his hands many of his valuable papers.

nal papers,<sup>1</sup> and made copies<sup>2</sup> of nearly the whole of the colony records."<sup>3</sup>

The intimate connection, indicated above,<sup>4</sup> in which the researches of Senator Foster stand to those of Governor Hopkins, is thus stated by the former :

"The infirmities of age induced him [Governor Hopkins] to relinquish" [the undertaking]. "But as he heard that I contemplated writing the history of the state, he kindly offered to assist me, by furnishing me with written materials and verbal information. It was therefore agreed that I should, one afternoon in a week, go to his house for the purpose.<sup>5</sup> I accordingly did so for some time."<sup>6</sup>

It is for this reason that it has been thought desirable to print the materials of these two writers in connection with each other.

It is not correct to speak of any portion of Senator Foster's work as having been completed. He himself regarded his work as simply "materials for history;" and it is clear that, although he hoped sometime to construct from these "materials" an actual history, he never did so. They consist, therefore, of entire paragraphs from such writers as Callender and Bentley, side by side with his own comment and narrative. He had apparently intended to bring these several

(1)These papers, both originals and copies, amount to about 1,000; and are preserved in sixteen bound volumes, now in the possession of the Rhode Island Historical Society. A "Chronological table" of such of them as relate to Rhode Island history, has been prepared. They are bound and labelled as the "Foster Papers."

(2)So lately as 1856-65, the records of the colony from 1632 to 1790 have been published under the direction of Hon. John R. Bartlett, with notes and copious indexes.

(3)Quoted from Arnold's "History of Rhode Island," I. v, vi. He also mentions Bull, whose work belongs to the present century.

(4)See Note 5.

(5) This was doubtless between 1776, in which year Governor Hopkins terminated his connection with the Continental Congress, and 1785, the date of his death.

(6)Foster Papers, VI. 19.

accounts into relation with each other, in constructing his narrative.

There are certain authorities of which Governor Hopkins, writing in 1762, and Mr. Foster in 1776 and later, would alike make use. Among these, named in the order of their publication, were probably the following: Samuel Gorton's "Simplifications defence," (1646);<sup>1</sup> Winslow's "Hypocrisie unmasked," (1646); Winslow's "New England's salamander, discovered," etc., (1647);<sup>2</sup> John Clarke's "Ill newes from New England," (1652);<sup>3</sup> Morton's "New England's memorial," (1669);<sup>4</sup> Cotton Mather's "Magnalia," (1702); Neal's "History of New England," (1720); Neal's "History of the Puritans," (1732-38); Prince's "Chronological history of New England," (1736, 1755);<sup>5</sup> Callender's "Historical discourse," (1739);<sup>6</sup> Douglass's "Summary, historical and political, of the British settlements in North America," (1749-53); and Dr. McSparran's "America dissected," (1753).<sup>7</sup> Of these works, all of which touch to some extent on the settlement and subsequent history of Rhode Island, some are specifically cited by title in the writings of Governor Hopkins<sup>8</sup> and

(1) Reprinted, 1835, in "Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society," II.

(2) Reprinted, 1830, in "Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society," 3d series, II. 110-45

(3) Reprinted, 1854, in "Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society," 4th series, II. 1-114.

(4) Reprinted, 6th ed., with notes, etc., Boston, 1855.

(5) In part reprinted in Mass. Hist. Soc. Collections, 2d series, VII, 189-296. An admirably edited version of Prince appeared in 1879, as vol. 2 of the "English garner," edited by Professor Edward Arber, (Birmingham, England).

(6) Reprinted, 1838, in R. I. Hist. Soc. Collections, IV.

(7) Reprinted, 1847, as an appendix to Updike's "History of the Episcopal Church in Narragansett," p. 483-533.

(8) It is apparent that Governor Hopkins had access to some of the writings of Roger Williams and John Cotton, but probably not to all.

Senator Foster, while others, no doubt, furnished the basis for various portions of their narratives. <sup>1</sup>

The latter writer, however, surviving Governor Hopkins for many years, <sup>2</sup> had the benefit of several other authorities of great value. Governor Winthrop's "History of New England," <sup>3</sup> was not made public until 1790, when Part I was put in print, quite unsatisfactorily, at Hartford. Both parts, issued by Mr. Savage with his careful revision and annotations, appeared together in 1826. Dr. Abiel Holmes's "American annals" appeared in 1805. From 1791 onward, the successive volumes of "Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society" have made their appearance, comprising works <sup>4</sup> which have added substantially to our knowledge of early New England history. <sup>5</sup>

Yet that which gives to the writings of these Rhode Island annalists their chief interest and value, is the very large amount of original and previously unprinted material to which they had access. Much of it they used. The greater part of it, however, they have handed down to us unused. <sup>6</sup> There is reason to believe that Governor Hopkins's efforts at collecting this manuscript material began quite early in life—perhaps so early

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(1) Of the works above mentioned, Prince's alone was in the Providence Library in 1769. See the "Catalogue" printed in that year.

(2) He died in 1828.

(3) Constantly referred to in these pages as "Winthrop's Journal." The references to pages follow the edition of 1853.

(4) For instance, in 1815, the "General history of New England," by Rev. William Hubbard, written between 1680 and 1704, and never before printed. Also, in 1800, "A description and history of Salem," by Rev. William Bentley, which gives considerable space to the history of Roger Williams.

(5) Among other works which appeared in the interval between 1762 and 1800 may be mentioned Volume I, of Governor Hutchinson's "History of the colony of Massachusetts's Bay," 1765; and Backus's "History of New England with particular reference to the denomination of Christians called Baptists," 1777, 1784, 1796.

(6) It is comprised in the manuscript volumes known as the "Foster Papers," already alluded to. See Note 6.

as 1740.<sup>1</sup> Most of it was handed over to Senator Foster, himself a most assiduous antiquarian during the half-century, 1775-1825. When it is remembered that the efforts of these gentlemen almost entirely preceded the formation of any local historical society<sup>2</sup> in the state, for the collection and preservation of such material, it will be seen how largely they have laid succeeding generations under obligation.

It is curious that to these two writers, possessing so much that is valuable in their method and material, should be due what is apparently a misconception of the essential principle underlying Roger Williams's expulsion from Massachusetts and founding of Rhode Island.<sup>3</sup> It is perhaps to be explained by the inevitably local point of view from which Governor Hopkins, writing so early in the last century, was obliged to treat the subject. Perhaps also by the fact that a full and comprehensive examination of Williams's relations to the communities in which he successively resided, has not been possible until our own generation. John Howland, writing so late as 1831, declared: "All that we at present know of the history of Roger Williams, would not fill more than half a dozen pages."<sup>4</sup> It is owing largely to the painstaking care with which Williams's writings have been edited and republished by the Narragansett Club,<sup>5</sup> that his character and career have, within the last twenty years, been brought into clear outline and into proper perspective.

No one, however, can examine the pages of Governor Hopkins and of Senator Foster without being impressed with the

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(1) Foster's "Stephen Hopkins," I. 133-34.

(2) The Rhode Island Historical Society was organized in 1822. Senator Foster was one of its earliest vice-presidents.

(3) In their accounts the question of freedom of conscience is made the essential occasion of this event. See Appendix No 2, where this matter is examined.

(4) Letter of John Howland to Rev. James D. Knowles, Jan. 27, 1831. (Printed in Stone's "Life and recollections of John Howland," p. 240.)

(5) "Publications of the Narragansett Club," 6 volumes, 1866-74.



absence of that bitterness and unmeasured resentment which have pervaded some accounts of matters in controversy. This state, in its picturesquely individual development, has been at more than one period in its history in hot conflict with Massachusetts and other neighboring states, and it is not surprising that historical narratives have been more than once tinged with the local animosities existing. Evidences of strong emotion, indeed, are to be looked for in the writings of men who themselves lived in the midst of these transactions, and were "a part of them." These elements give to their narratives their literary character; and were they absent, there would be taken from these accounts, as from the *Iliad*, or from Lord Clarendon's "Civil wars," much that appeals to universal human interest. It is not thus, however, that history is written; and it is not the least among the merits of these two annalists, that their pages are free from these manifestations of resentment. The traditional differences are now historic only, and may assuredly be treated in a dispassionate manner.



## EXTRACT FROM PUBLISHER'S ADDRESS. <sup>1</sup>

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It being imagined that an historical account of the planting and growth of Providence would be worthy the public attention, and redound to the honor of this paper, a gentleman of the first distinction, a true friend to his country, enabled the publisher to begin the work in the first number of this paper, but some necessary memorials being then wanting, for the accurate performance of it, and some important business intervening, it was obliged to be laid aside for some future time. The war we were then engaged in, being terminated, <sup>2</sup> and the author having furnished himself with proper materials for prosecuting the undertaking, it is now resumed, and will occasionally make its appearance in this paper till the whole is completed.—The first part being published so long since, and many kind readers had not the advantage of it, it is thought proper to reprint it, for their benefit, with the continuation.—And as all nations, in all ages, have ever been desirous of registering their genealogies, from their original foundations in the records of time, it is not doubted but this attempt will meet with the public applause, and in some measure demonstrate the sincerity of the publisher's professions, as well as afford a specimen of his future intentions in the service of the public;—for by this history, we may be acquainted with the resolution, the sufferings, the hardships, the fatigues and cares, the wants, and even the blood expended by our forefathers in laying the foundation of our now peaceable, happy settlements, and therewith of the inestimable enjoyments of civil and religious liberty.

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(1) The above was prefixed to Governor Hopkins's account by William Goddard, the publisher of the *Gazette*. It appeared in the issue of January 12, 1765.

(2) The "Seven years' war," 1756-63.



## THE PLANTING AND GROWTH OF PROVIDENCE.

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The <sup>1</sup> unhappy disputes that raged in England, both in church and state, in the reigns of King James the First, and King Charles the First, although they were the immediate cause of infinite mischiefs in that kingdom, in the times they happened, yet were they also the remote cause of very great advantages to the English nation afterwards: Among which advantages, the peopling of New-England, occasioned by those disputes, may be esteemed one of the most considerable.

The first planting of New-England was begun by Mr. John Carver, and about one hundred other English subjects; who, being persecuted in England for not conforming in every punctilio to the established church, for the sake of worshipping God according to their consciences, left their native country, with all its conveniences and delights, and arrived at Cape Cod in the month of November, in the year 1620; where they landed in the depth of winter, having no houses or shelter to cover them from the injuries of the weather, endured incredible hardships, and passed through unparalleled sufferings; and, supported only by a noble fortitude of mind, and the consciousness of well-doing, they gloriously effected the settlement of New Plymouth, the first of the New-England colonies.

Near ten years afterwards, in the year 1630, Mr. John Winthrop, with many other gentlemen, and about fifteen hundred people, <sup>2</sup> left their native country for the same cause, and came

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(1) At this point begins Governor Hopkins's narrative. The text followed in the reprint here given is that of the *Providence Gazette*, in its issues of January 12, 19, 26, February 2, 9, 16, March 16, 30, 1765. From pages 15 to 20 had previously appeared in the *Gazette* of October 20, 1762.

(2) "For the common reckoning of fifteen hundred," says Palfrey, "there is no earlier or better authority than the Charlestown records, compiled in 1664." ("History of New England," I. 313.) But this account, says Young, who reprints it in his "Chronicles of Massachusetts Bay," is "not a con-

over first to Salem, and from thence to Charlestown, from whence they dispersed themselves to Dorchester, Watertown, and Boston, and effectually begun the settlement of the Massachusetts-Bay, the second of the New-England colonies.<sup>1</sup>

With this second colony came over Mr. Roger Williams;<sup>2</sup> of whose life, before his coming to America, we know little more, than that he had a liberal education; and was some time pupil of Sir Edward Coke, the famous English lawyer. Soon after his coming to Salem he was made assistant in the ministry to Mr. Samuel Skelton, the first minister of that town. Before he had been long in this station, some difference in opinion arose between Mr. Skelton and him, and to prevent its increase, Mr. Williams removed to Plymouth, and became minister<sup>3</sup> of the church there; but some disputes happening here also between him and some of his church, he did not continue long with them, but in returned to Salem, and finding Mr. Skelton now in a declining state of health, he again assisted him in the ministry. After Mr. Skelton's death, which soon happened,<sup>4</sup> Mr. Williams was made sole minister<sup>5</sup> of the church of Salem, and continued so for some time, much esteemed as a preacher, and greatly

temporaneous document." "Its chronology, too, is all wrong." ("Chronicles," p. 387.) Instead of 1500, only about 980 have been figured up. See the table of arrivals in Young's "Chronicles," p. 310-11, *note*.

- (1) See Senator Foster's "Materials," elsewhere in this volume.
- (2) The fleet which sailed with Winthrop arrived at Salem, June 12, 1630. Mr. Williams did not arrive until February 5, 1630-1.
- (3) He was not "minister, but rather "assistant minister," (Morton's "New England's Memorial," Ed. 1826, p. 15).
- (4) Mr. Skelton had been chosen "pastor" by the Salem church, and Francis Higginson "teacher," on the same day (July 20, 1629). Mr. Higginson died Aug. 6, 1630. Mr. Skelton died August 2, 1634.
- (5) "Sole minister." He apparently served without a formal settlement until 1635. Winthrop's entry in his journal under date of July 8, 1635, is that "the church had since called him to the office of a teacher." ("Winthrop's Journal," I, 194.) This is understood by Rev. Dr. Dexter to justify the inference that the ordination took place early in May, 1635. ("As to Roger Williams," p. 36, *note*).

beloved by most of his church. Yet some of his tenets were looked upon as dangerous and heterodox, by the lesser, but ruling part of them.—Such were his asserting, “that the king of England had no right<sup>1</sup> to take the lands in America, from the Indians and give them to his own subjects;” And also, “that an universal liberty of conscience<sup>2</sup> ought to be allowed to all, in religious matters.” For these opinions, Mr. Williams was at length called to an account, and openly justifying them, he was for this offence deprived of his ministry, and banished<sup>3</sup> from Salem, and the Massachusetts colony. In consequence of this sentence, Mr. Williams was sent into the wilderness to shift for himself. But so great was the love of some of his church for him, that they would not forsake him even in this extreme distress; and twelve<sup>4</sup> of them voluntarily went into exile, and the solitary wilderness with him.—Without any guide,<sup>5</sup> but heaven, they wandered southward, and came to a place called Seaconk, and thinking they were now far enough removed from their offended brethren, designed to sit down there; But it seems, the fame of their heretical opinions had reached to Plymouth, and thereupon an officer was sent from thence to order them to depart out of that colony also.

Being now quite forlorn, this officer kindly informed them that the arm of the bay,<sup>6</sup> then near them, was the western boundary of the Plymouth colony. They therefore once more removed, and found means to transport themselves over this arm of the bay, now called Seaconk river, and came to a place by the Indians called Moshasuck. As they now<sup>7</sup> found them-

(1) On this point see Kent's "Commentaries on American law." III, 463-73.

(2) See Appendix II.

(3) See Appendix I.

(4) See page 19 for their names.

(5) The authority for this period of Mr. Williams's history is his well-known letter to Major John Mason, dated January 22, 1670. (Narragansett Club Publications, VI, 333-50.)

(6) The Blackstone or Seekonk river.

(7) Probably in April or May, 1636.

selves in the country of the Narragansett Indians, Mr. Williams applied to the sachem or king of that people, whose name was Conanicus, truly stated his unhappy case to him, and begged his protection, which this noble prince kindly granted to him and his associates, and also generously made them a present <sup>1</sup> of all that neck of land lying between the mouths of Pawtucket and Moshasuck rivers, that they might sit down in peace upon it and enjoy it forever. Upon this neck of land, given them by the beneficent sachem, they settled themselves in the best manner their very poor, and truly deplorable circumstances would admit of; being quite destitute of every necessary, as well as conveniency of life, and entirely cut off from all communication with every part of mankind, except the savages. Even those, with whom they had so lately left their native country, for the same cause of religion, were now become their greatest persecutors and most cruel enemies. This settlement was the feeble beginning of the third New-England colony, first planted some time in the year 1634, <sup>2</sup> by the renowned and worthy Mr. Roger Williams, and his twelve poor suffering companions, namely, John

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(1) The deed, dated March 24, 1638, confirms the grant made two years before. The original is preserved in the office of the recorder of deeds, in the Providence City Hall. For a copy, see Staples's "Annals of the town of Providence," p. 26-27; also R. I. Col. Records, I. 18-19.

These early Indian deeds (of 1638, 1639, and 1659), have recently been transcribed and republished, with extraordinary care, by Mr. F. A. Arnold, in the *Narragansett Historical Register*, II, 222-25, 287-97, and also separately published in pamphlet form.

(2) This date should, of course, be 1636. Consequently also, the colony was the fourth and not the third. The same mistake was made by Callender, (p. 73), in 1739. These writers were doubtless misled by the language of Mr. Williams in a deed dated December 20, 1661, in which he speaks of negotiations with the Narragansett sachems in 1634 and 1635, before leaving Salem. (R. I. Col. Records, I 22.) Hubbard's "New England" gives the date 1634 to the chapter as a whole (chapter 30), which details the "Disturbance occasioned by Mr. Roger Williams."



Throckmorton, <sup>1</sup> William Arnold, <sup>2</sup> William Harris, Stukely Westcott, <sup>3</sup> John Greene, Thomas Olney, Richard Waterman, Thomas James, Robert Cole, <sup>4</sup> William Carpenter, Francis Weston and Ezekiel Holliman.

This small company Mr. Williams formed into a church, and on that occasion <sup>5</sup> piously observed to his brethren, that the Providence of God had found out a place for them among savages, where they might peaceably worship God according to their consciences; a privilege which had been denied them in all the Christian countries they had ever been in. <sup>6</sup>—In thankfulness for this greatest of blessings, he named the place where they were settled, PROVIDENCE. As they were all fully sensible of the horrid mischiefs and atrocious sin of persecution, they established an universal liberty of conscience, as well for all others who should come and settle with them, as for themselves: And this natural right of all mankind, has been inviolably maintained <sup>7</sup> throughout the colony to this day. Liberty

(1) Throckmorton, Westcott, Olney, James and Holliman were from the Salem church. See letter of Rev. Hugh Peter, July 1, 1639, printed in Knowles's "Roger Williams," p. 176-177. He spells the first of these names "Throgmorton."

(2) William Arnold was brother to Thomas Arnold, from whom Governor Hopkins (the narrator) was a descendant in the fifth generation.

(3) The name is spelled "Westcott" in the R. I. Col. Records, I. 21.

(4) Commonly written "Coles."

(5) Probably some time in March, 1639. See Hague's "Historical discourse," 1839, p. 32; also Stanford's manuscript history of the First Baptist Church; compare also Winthrop's Journal, I. 352-53.

(6) This period is lacking in the *Gazette's* version.

(7) The maintenance of this right in Rhode Island was destined to meet with some severe trials, which, however, it successfully encountered. When in the latter half of the century, the excesses of the Quakers were distracting Rhode Island as well as Massachusetts, Roger Williams wrote, (1676): "A due and moderate restraint and punishing of these incivilities (though pretending conscience), is as far from persecution, (properly so called) as that it is a duty and command of God." [Narragansett Club, V. 307. Compare also V. 309-11.] Yet this idea was never embodied in official action by the Rhode Island colony. In 1658, answer was returned by the General Assembly to the Massachusetts government, that "Whereas freedom of different consciences, to be pro-

of conscience being settled in this, and denied in the two neighboring colonies, soon brought more of those to join with them, whose faith did not exactly agree with the fixed standards there; and in a short time afterwards there were added to the church at Providence, Robert Williams, John Smith, Hugh Bewit, William Wickenden,<sup>1</sup> John Field, Thomas Hopkins<sup>1</sup> and William Hawkins.<sup>2</sup>

Having given this short account of these planters, in their several migrations, until they are at last settled at Providence, let us stand still for a moment and view them in this their very indigent condition; equally admire their sufferings and their patience, and wonder how they could possibly live, quite destitute of every necessary and every convenience of life; having no magazine of provisions, or stores of any kind; no domestic animal to assist them in their labor, or afford them sustenance; no utensils or husbandry tools, to facilitate their tilling the earth; nothing to help themselves with, but their hands; nothing to depend on but God's goodness, their own endeavors, and the charity of savages.<sup>3</sup>

Nor house, nor hut, or fruitful field,  
Nor lowing herd, nor bleating flock;  
Or garden that might comfort yield,  
No chearful early crowing cock.

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tected from inforcements was the principle [sic] ground of our charter," they must refuse to join with the other colonies in measures against the Quakers. (R. I. Col. Records, I. 378.)

The reputed discrimination against Roman Catholics in the laws of the colony has been considered by Chalmers, in his "Political annals of the present United Colonies," p. 276; Walsh's "Appeal from the judgments of Great Britain," (part first,) p. 428; also a letter of Samuel Eddy, printed at p. 429-35 of Walsh; T. T. Stone's address on "Roger Williams, the prophetic legislator," and a note of Charles Deane's in the chapter on "New England," in the forthcoming "Narrative and critical history of America," edited by Justin Winsor.

- (1) Both Wickenden and Hopkins were ancestors of Governor Hopkins.
- (2) At this point the portion printed in 1762 terminates.
- (3) For a vivid reproduction of the life of these early years, in its minutest details; the streets, pastures, houses, household furniture, customs, and manner of life; see H. C. Dorr's "Planting and growth of Providence," already referred to.



No orchard, yielding pleasant fruit,  
 Or laboring ox, or useful plow;  
 Nor neighing steed, or browsing goat,  
 Or grunting swine, or foodful cow.

No friend to help, no neighbour nigh,  
 Nor healing medicine to restore;  
 No mother's hand to close the eye,  
 Alone, forlorn, and most extremely poor.<sup>1</sup>

Nothing but extreme diligence, and matchless perseverance, could possibly have carried them through this undertaking; could have procured them the scanty morsels which supported a life of want and of innocence. Too much have we their descendants departed from the diligence, fortitude, frugality, and innocence of these our fathers.—While we enjoy the blessings they procured for us, live at ease, and fare sumptuously, we little think, we too little remember, that they from whom we have received all our conveniences, were destitute of everything themselves: When we live luxuriously, we seldom call to mind the sufferings of these patriarchs, who wanted even the bread of affliction. The poor unhappy Indians, have had an ungrateful return for their kindness to the first settlers; they who received and cherished our ancestors in their distress, were rather despised than relieved, when we had got their country from them, when we had changed conditions with them, and they in their turn were in distress;—but they were heathens, they were savages:—A poor excuse for ingratitude, or want of charity in Christians.

The indigent condition of these planters, the necessity they were under to labor continually, for the support of themselves and families, was most probably the reason they left scarcely any memorials<sup>2</sup> behind them in writing of what hap-

(1) In the *Gazette*, there are no spaces between the stanzas. Gov. Hopkins has not thought proper to leave a record of the authorship of these lines.

(2) There was, in fact, little leisure or inclination in the infancy of the settlement, for literary work. "There were in the early days of the Plantations but scanty means of family or social enjoyment when the day's work was done. If the settlers had brought books, hard labour left few

pened, or was transacted during the first nine years after their coming to Providence. Mr. Williams was certainly very capable of writing, and seems to have delighted in it, when circumstances afterwards afforded him an opportunity; several of his companions also wrote many things afterwards: Therefore this total neglect of writing for 'so long a time, must be attributed to their necessitous condition; and perhaps to the want of even paper to write on: This appears the more probable, as the first of their writings, that are to be found, appear on small scraps of paper, wrote as thick and crowded as full as possible. <sup>1</sup> Whatever might be the occasion of it, this want of authentic materials for so long a time, will make it impossible to mention many interesting matters, that must necessarily happen during this period. However, tradition has furnished us with some things, and the writings made afterwards, near the time, have taken notice of others, that may be fully depended on.

Soon after the first planting of Providence, and within the same year, 1634, <sup>2</sup> Mr. Williams purchased of Conanicus, the Indian king, a large tract of land, lying between Pawtucket River, and Pawtuxet River, and to extend up the stream of each river, twenty miles from the sea. <sup>3</sup> This purchase includes

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opportunities for reading them;" and instead of candles, they had "the light of pine knots for their sole guide in evening work or study." (Dorr's "Providence," p. 31-32.) The lack of such early memorials is felt as a serious deficiency in Rhode Island history. Many of the records, moreover, and other written memorials, were destroyed in 1676, when the town of Providence was burned by the Indians.

- (1) Some of the original scraps of manuscript are preserved in the bound volumes of the "Foster Papers." Compare Appendix III.
- (2) The date of the "first planting of Providence," as before, should be 1636. See note 2 at page 18. The tract of land referred to was obtained by treaties before his departure from Salem.
- (3) These bounds would of course find their limit on the north, in the south line of the Massachusetts colony, established by the charter of 1629. They found their limit on the west in the east line of the Connecticut colony, subsequently established, (by the charter of 1662). The southern and eastern limits of the Providence Plantations occasioned vexatious disputes even earlier than the northern and western. No formal defining of Rhode Island bounds by authority occurred until the patent of 1643, and even this patent left the western line very indefinite.

all the lands which now <sup>1</sup> make the towns of Providence, Smithfield, Scituate, Gloucester, Cranston, and Johnston. What consideration was given the sachem for this land, we are not informed; whatever it was, it seems to have been paid by Mr. Williams alone. This I conjecture from a remonstrance of his to the town of Providence, in his own hand writing, in the year 1654, <sup>2</sup> in which he expostulates with the people for their disorders, and great animosities; and upbraids them with their great ingratitude to heaven, and to himself, in the following words:

“I am like a man in a fog;<sup>3</sup> I know not well how to steer; I fear to run upon rocks at home, after having had many trials abroad; I fear to run quite backwards, and to undo all that I have been this long time undoing myself to do: To wit, To keep up the name of a people, a free people; not enslaved, in body or soul, to the bondages and iron yokes of oppression, both of the English and barbarians about us; nor to the divisions and disorders within ourselves. Since I set the first step of any English foot in these wild parts, and have maintained a chargeable and hazardous correspondence with the barbarians, and spent almost five years time<sup>4</sup> with the state of England, to keep off the rage of the English against us, what have I reaped of being the root, of being the stepping stone to so many families and towns about us, but grief and sorrow and bitterness? I have been charged with folly, for that freedom and liberty I have always stood for; I say liberty and equality, both in land and government. I have been blamed for parting with Moshasuck, and afterwards Pawtucket,<sup>5</sup> *which were mine own as truly as any man's coat upon his back*, without reserving to myself one foot of land, or one inch of voice, more than to my ser-

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(1) “Which now make,” etc. This was written early in 1765. To the towns here mentioned, the following, incorporated since then, need now to be added: North Providence, (1765); Foster, (1781); Burrillville, (1806); Pawtucket, in part, (1862); Woonsocket, in part, (1867); Lincoln, (1871); North Smithfield, (1871).

(2) Printed in Narragansett Club Pub., vi, 262-66; also in R. I. Col. Records, I. 351.

(3) “In a great fog,” reads the Narragansett Club copy.

(4) 1643-44, 1651-54.

(5) Pawtuxet. See “Staples's Annals,” p. 576-78.

vants, or strangers. It hath been told me that I have labored for a licentious and contentious people,—that I have foolishly parted with many advantages.”

What makes me suppose Mr. Williams paid the whole consideration of this first and great purchase, is, his saying as above, that these lands were his own as truly as any man's coat on his back : However this might be, 'tis certain he immediately made his twelve companions equal proprietors <sup>1</sup> with himself, both in the lands given by the sachem, and those he had purchased of him. And those who came afterwards and settled in Providence, were generally, for a small consideration, admitted <sup>2</sup> to be equal sharers in the greater part of these lands, until the whole number of proprietors came at length to an hundred.

It is most probable these first settlers did not bring their wives and families with them at their first coming, and that they were not removed to Providence, until some time in the year 1637 ; for we have heard by tradition <sup>3</sup> and I believe truly, that the first male child born there, was Mr. Williams's eldest son, and whom he, for that reason, named Providence ; and this child appears by the records to have been born in the month of September 1638 : <sup>4</sup> But a female child had been born there some time before, although in the same year.

Near the time <sup>5</sup> that Providence was first began, one Mr. William Blackstone came and settled by the side of Pawtucket River, near the southern part of that which is now the town of

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(1) See the deeds printed in Staples's "Annals," p. 30-34, also in the R. I. Col. Records, I. 17, 19-21.

(2) See R. I. Col. Records, I. 14, 22-25.

(3) "By tradition." With no ancestor among Roger Williams's companions in his original journey from Salem, but with two among those almost immediately added, there was, of course, a stronger probability than is usual that Gov. Hopkins's "tradition" would be trustworthy.

(4) Snow's "Alphabetical index of births, marriages, and deaths in Providence, 1636-1850," I. 66, 67.

(5) "Near the time that Providence was first began." Rather it was two years before, in 1634. See the note on Blackstone in the "Memorial

Cumberland. He was a man of learning, and had received Episcopal ordination in England, and seems to have been of the puritan persuasion, and to have left his native country for his non-conformity; at what time is quite unknown: But when the Massachusetts colony first came to America, they found him settled on that peninsula where the town of Boston now stands; he had been there so long as to have raised apple-trees and planted an orchard. Upon his invitation, the principal part of that colony removed from Charlestown thither, and began the town on the land he generously gave them for that purpose. However, it was not long before a new kind of non-conformity obliged him to leave the remainder of his estate on that renowned peninsula, to these numerous new-comers, and to remove a second time into the wilderness. On this occasion, he made use of these remarkable expressions, "I left England to get from under the power of the lord bishops, but in America I am fallen under the power of the lord brethren." At this his new plantation he lived uninterrupted for many years, and there again raised an orchard, the first that ever bore apples in the colony of Rhode-Island: He had the first of that sort called yellow sweetings, that were ever in the world; perhaps, the richest and most delicious apple of the whole kind: Many of the trees, which he planted about one hundred and thirty years ago, are still <sup>1</sup> pretty thrifty fruit-bearing trees. Mr. Blackstone used frequently to come to Providence, to preach the gospel; and to encourage his younger hearers, gave them the first apples they ever saw. It is said, that when he was old, and unable to travel on foot, and not having any horse, he used to ride on a bull, which he had tamed and tutored to that use. His family is now extinct.

The fame of the good lands on the borders of Connecticut River, invited some people from the Massachusetts thither, who,

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history of Boston," I. 84-85, where he is pronounced "the first white inhabitant" of Rhode Island. Compare, however, Winthrop's Journal, I. 87.

(1) 1765.



in the year 1635, viewed those lands, examined and found out the most suitable places for, and made some preparations toward a settlement; and the next year, 1636, a large number of people removed from the Massachusetts; some of the principal of which were Mr. Hains,<sup>1</sup> who, as I suppose, was the year before governor of that province, Mr. Hopkins,<sup>2</sup> first governor of Connecticut, Mr. Hooker, first minister of Hartford, Mr. Ludlow, and others, and made an effectual settlement of the towns of Hartford, Weathersfield<sup>3</sup> and Windsor, all on the banks of the said river. This was the beginning of Connecticut, the fourth<sup>4</sup> of the New-England colonies; which seems not to have been began for the same cause, that the other three which preceded it were; that is, to avoid persecution, and enjoy liberty of conscience;<sup>5</sup> but the people were induced to make this remove to better their circumstances;<sup>6</sup> and indeed the choice they made of a place to remove to, hath fully vindicated their judgment to succeeding generations; being seated by the sides of much the largest and finest river in New-England, which is capable of affording, perhaps the most exten-

(1) "John Haynes" is the correct spelling. He was governor of the colony of Massachusetts Bay, 1635, and first governor of the colony of Connecticut, serving in 1639, 1641, and 1643. It was under him that Roger Williams was sentenced, in Massachusetts.

(2) Governor Edward Hopkins, of Connecticut, was not the "first" but the second governor of that colony. There is no connection between his family and that of Governor Stephen Hopkins of Rhode Island. See Foster's "Stephen Hopkins," I. 11, II. 222.

(3) Now written "Wethersfield."

(4) Governor Hopkins is again misled by the adoption of 1634 as the date of Williams's removal. Connecticut is the third, and Rhode Island the fourth. The settlement at Hartford was made in November, 1635.

(5) See Appendix I.

(6) Palfrey points out as a significant fact, that "the Connecticut emigrants did not adopt in their own settlement that radical feature of the social system of Massachusetts, which founded the civil franchise on church membership." (History of New England," I. 447.) (Compare also the "Fundamental orders of Connecticut," printed in the "Federal and state constitutions," I. 251).

sive <sup>1</sup> water-carriage of any river that empties into the sea between Carolina and the Bay of St. Laurence; and which like the famed Nile, annually, about the beginning of April, overflows and fertilizes all the intervals and low lands near it. Yet not in the exceeding fruitfulness of these low lands only, does this colony exceed, but even their hill lands, both for pasturage and for tilling, have been found, by experience, to produce much better than the other lands in New-England.

The following year, 1637, a settlement was begun at New-Haven, <sup>2</sup> by a number of people directly from England, <sup>3</sup> under the leading of Mr. Eaton and Mr. Davenport; doubtless for the same reason <sup>4</sup> the first three were planted, because they were not permitted, in their native country, to worship God in the manner they thought most acceptable to him. <sup>5</sup> This settlement had for some time, the name of the Colony of New-Haven, and was the fifth planted in New England; but, in process of time, came to be united to, and swallowed up in the name of that of Connecticut, as New-Plymouth also was in Massachusetts. <sup>6</sup>

Some time in the same year 1637, the first war <sup>7</sup> broke out in New-England, between the English and the Indians; this was with a powerful nation, or tribe called Pequots, who dwelt in the southeastern part of the colony of Connecticut, and

(1) This perhaps may be questioned. The geography of the colonies was not known with great accuracy in 1765.

(2) The reconnoitring for a settlement was made in the autumn of 1637; and a few men occupied the site of New Haven through the winter; but the great body of the settlers did not arrive until April, 1638.

(3) Not "directly from England" but *after a winter spent in Boston*.

(4) Compare also the frame of government adopted Jan. 14, 1639, printed in Connecticut Colony records, I. 21. See Appendix I.

(5) See Appendix I.

(6) New Haven was absorbed in Connecticut in 1665; New Plymouth in Massachusetts Bay in 1691.

(7) The main authority for the history of this war is Mason's "History of the Pequot War," written by the principal military leader in it, but not published until 1736. It lasted from March 1637, to September, 1638.

chiefly on the lands which now make the towns of Stonington and Groton. The occasion of this war was doubtless a jealousy in the Indians of the increasing numbers and growing power of the English, who they saw had already dispersed themselves into all the principal parts of New-England, and whose strength grew daily greater, by the addition of new-comers, that joined them in their various plantations: That the manner in which they improved the land, and fed their domestic animals, some of which were now in the country, must in a short time cut them off from the sea coasts, and quite deprive them of their various fisheries, and at the same time destroy their game in the woods, and in the end quite ruin their hunting. These being the principal sources of their scanty livelihood, no body can wonder they were alarmed at the dreadful mischiefs which threatened them; and at length determined to extirpate by war, the late arrived people, who occasioned the danger, before their numbers and power were too much increased.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, this was by much the most probable attempt ever made by the Indians, to cut off the English settlers, yet, as it were, in their very infancy, and now greatly dispersed; Connecticut not of two years standing; Providence, though a year older,<sup>2</sup> had but a handful of people; the Massachusetts had been planted only seven years; and Plymouth, that began seventeen years before, had not yet increased to any considerable number. Had these Indians succeeded in their attempts to unite all the neighboring nations and tribes in this war, as a common cause, in which the loss or preservation of their country, and all they had was concerned, it must have been very difficult, if not impossible for the English, under their present circumstances, to have defended themselves against so great a number of enemies. For it is said, at this time the Narragansets,<sup>3</sup> alone, had

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(1) See Senator Foster's memoranda on King Philip's War.

(2) "A year younger" would be more correct. See above, note 2, page 18.

(3) "Narraganset." This spelling is usual in early records and accounts. See the remarks of Dr. J. Hammond Trumbull, "Indian names of places," p. 35. On the origin of the name see R. I. Col. Records, I. 26.



four thousand fighting men ; by which some guess may be made of the strength of the other Indian nations, who dwelt in New-England. Here we shall have occasion to view Mr. Williams, in, perhaps, the most useful and important part of his life : We have already seen him the founder of one colony, but must now consider him as a principal instrument in preserving them all. <sup>1</sup> He, by great application, had made himself master of the Indian language, <sup>2</sup> and by a courteous behaviour to the natives, and a conduct honest and quite disinterested, had made himself highly respected by the Narraganset sachems, and all their people, and had at this time much more influence over them, than any other man ever had at any time. And as Joseph was sold by his envious brethren, with intent to get him out of their way, yet Divine Providence over-ruled this cruel action quite otherwise than they intended, and made it the means of their future preservation ; so the harsh treatment and cruel exile of Mr. Williams, seem designed by his brethren for the same evil end, but was, by the goodness of the same overruling hand, turned to the most beneficent purposes. For no sooner was it known that the Pequots meditated a war with the English, than they, from every colony, applied to Mr. Williams, to use his influence with the Narragansets, and to prevent, if possible, their joining with the Pequots, in making war with them. This service he cheerfully undertook, and succeeded in it beyond their warmest expectations ; for he prevailed with the Narraganset Indians, not only to remain in peace with the Eng-

(1) The recognition of his services by Gov. Winthrop was particularly grateful to him. He writes, (in 1670) : "I judge it no impertinent digression to recite (out of the many scores of letters at times, from Mr. Winthrop), this one pious and heavenly prophecy, touching all New England, of that gallant man, viz. : 'If the Lord turn away his face from our sins, and bless our endeavors and yours. at this time against our bloody enemy, we and our children shall long enjoy peace, in this our wilderness condition.' And himself and some other of the council motioned, and it was debated, whether or no I had not merited, not only to be recalled from banishment, but also to be honored with some remark of favor." (Letter to Major Mason, June 22, 1670, Narragansett Club, VI. 339.)

(2) His "Key into the language of America," published in 1643, represented the fruits of at least twenty years' careful study of the Indian dialects.

lish, but to declare openly for them, and act offensively against the Pequots. This conduct of the most powerful nation <sup>1</sup> in this part of the country, threw such a damp on the other neighboring nations, that none of them joined with the Pequots, but left them to prosecute this war by themselves, and in which they were overcome by the English, and their Indian allies; and the war was soon ended in the almost total extirpation of the whole Pequot race.

In the beginning of the following year 1638, Rhode Island, by the Indians called Aquetneck, <sup>2</sup> was settled by a number of people that came from Boston, and some of the other towns near it. This settlement had its beginning from the same cause that most of the others in New-England had; to wit, religious disputes. The departure of Mr. Williams, and those who left the Massachusetts with him, or had since followed them, did not put an end to these controversies, but they kept increasing and spreading further and further: One pretended error produced many more of the same kind, and so fruitful was this metaphysical mischief, that a synod being convened at Cambridge, in the year 1637, <sup>3</sup> it very soon picked up, debated and condemned eighty <sup>4</sup> errors, and like other synods before them, denied all mercy to those they supposed held these errors, both in this world and in the world to come.

God Almighty, in the early age of the world, confounded the language of mankind, while they remained in the Plains of Shinar, and by that means caused them to disperse and people the whole earth; so in the times I am writing of, he seems to have permitted discord, censoriousness, and the most unforgiving temper of mind, to prevail universally among the people, and to have made it a means of planting most parts of New-England. When we look back upon these people, who were men of strong natural powers, and many of them had much

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(1) "Nation;" that is, Indian tribe.

(2) Or Aquidneck.

(3) See Winthrop's summary of the proceedings in his Journal, I. 284-88.

(4) The exact number is eighty-two.

learning; had lately left their native country, and all its delights, forsook all for Christ's sake and the gospel, and removed into a wilderness; were poor, were laborious, were pious sincere Christians; were devout and zealous to a fault; supported the most unblameable moral character of any people in any age or country; when after all this, and much more that might be truly said in their favor, to see them worrying one another without remorse, for meer trifles; to view them pursuing each other to banishment, and even to death, as though they had dissolved every social engagement, and cut asunder every tender tie, and were abandoned to furious madness, and unrelenting cruelty,—what shall we say?—what can we think?—We can only deplore the miserable imperfections of human nature, and stand amazed at the stupendous miscarriages of the best of men!

The matters in dispute, and which were the ground of all these mighty contentions, and keen animosities, consisted chiefly in fine-spun subtilties, and useless metaphysical niceties; from the knowledge, belief, or disbelief of which, mankind could be made neither wiser or better. Indeed, in what manner our religious ideas ought to be ranged, that is, which ought properly to precede, and which follow, was the principal point in dispute. And this grand unintelligible [sic] question, raised such contentions, and bred such uneasiness in the churches in the Massachusetts colony, that many of considerable note, for piety, for estate and family, and for usefulness, came to a determination to remove once more into the wilderness, quite out of, and beyond the limits claimed by any of the colonies yet settled. The principal of these was William Coddington, Esq.; the father of Rhode-Island;<sup>1</sup> he was a gentleman of

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(1) Mr. Coddington's career has been examined by Dr. Henry E. Turner, in his monograph, "William Coddington in Rhode Island colonial affairs," (Rhode Island Historical Tracts, No. 4). Dr. Turner dissents (p. 16) from the application to Coddington of the terms "Father of Rhode Island," or "Founder of Rhode Island," "in the sense in which Roger Williams may, with some propriety, be represented to be the father or founder of Providence."

family, and of a competent fortune, was chosen an assistant of the Massachusetts Colony, while they were in England, and came over to America with the governor, the charter, and the colony, in 1630, settled at Boston, and was one of its first and most considerable merchants. Mr. John Clark <sup>1</sup> was another; a man of sound understanding, sufficient knowledge, and much usefulness; who was afterwards this colony's agent in England, and procured its present charter; he gathered and was minister of the First Baptist Church at Rhode-Island.—Those who joined with them in this resolution to remove, were William Hutchinson, <sup>2</sup> John Coggeshall, William Aspinwall, Samuel Wilbore, John Porter, John Sanford, Edward Hutchinson, Thomas Savage, William Dyre, William Freeborn, <sup>3</sup> Philip Shearman, John Walker, Richard Carder, William Baulston, Edward Hutchinson, jun. and Henry Bull.

These having resolved to remove, sent Mr. John Clark, and another with him, to Providence, to advise with Mr. Williams on the business, and to be informed where they might find a convenient place to make their new settlement. Mr. Williams recommended two places to their consideration, one by the Indians called So-wames, <sup>4</sup> being the lands in and about the present town of Warren; the other, the island called Aquet-neck, now Rhode-Island: But as they were determined to go out of every other jurisdiction, that they might, if possible, avoid future controversies, and were in doubt whether these lands were not within the claim of Plymouth Colony; for clearing up that doubt, Mr. Williams accompanied Mr. Clark to

(1) Dr. Clarke published in London in 1652 "Ill newes from New England," (reprinted in the "Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society," series 4, II, 1-114).

(2) William Hutchinson. His wife Mrs. Anne Hutchinson was the occasion of no little excited feeling in the Massachusetts colony, in connection with the "Antinomian" difficulties.

(3) "William Freeborne," (Callender, p. 84).

(4) "Perhaps Sowames is properly the name of the river where the two Swansey rivers meet and run together for near a mile." (Callender, p. 84).

Plymouth, where they were informed, that So-wames was within, and esteemed as the very garden of that colony; but that they had no claim to Aquetneek, and advised them to settle there, where they would be esteemed and treated as friends and neighbours. Upon that island they therefore now determined to sit down, if they could procure it of the Indians; and in order to do that, they prevailed on Mr. Williams to apply to the Narraganset sachem in their behalf, and, if possible, make a purchase of the said island for them. The king, or sachem of the Narraganset Indians, at this time, and perhaps a year or two before, was the young Myantonomo; Conanicus,<sup>1</sup> his uncle, having had the government for the kingdom, and guardianship of the young prince during his minority, had, when he came to an age fit to govern, delivered the regal authority into the hands of this his nephew. To him, therefore, did Mr. Williams now make application, for the purchase of Rhode-Island for his friends; and at length prevailed with him to make a grant of that whole island to Mr. Coddington, Mr. Clark, and their associates.<sup>2</sup>—The sachem's deed, or grant, was signed the 24th day of March, 1637, old stile.

The Indians seem not to have been induced to part with this island, so much in consideration of any price that was paid them for it, as out of the great love and regard they bore to Mr. Williams, as appears from the account he has left of this transaction, in his own hand writing.<sup>3</sup>—“It was not price nor money that could have purchased Rhode Island. Rhode Island was purchased by love; by the love and favor which that honored gentleman Sir Henry Vane, and myself, had with the great sachem Miantonomo, about the league which I procured between the Massachusetts English, &c. and the Narragansets, in the Pequot war.”—“For the Indians were very shy and jeal-

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(1) The name “Canonicus,” now written, is obviously a mis-spelling of the original form.

(2) It is printed in the appendix to Callender, p. 214-16.

(3) See “Publications of the Narragansett Club,” VI. 305-6. It is in the Providence Records, 1658.



ous of selling the lands to any, and chose rather to make a grant (or gift) of them to such as they affected."

Having thus fairly acquired a just title to the finest island that is on the whole sea coasts of the northern British colonies, as well for its form and situation, as its fertile soil, and beautiful bays, capacious safe harbors, temperate climate, and healthful air, they immediately began a settlement at the northeastern part of the island, opposite to Mount Hope, and near a cove with a narrow entrance, which they esteemed to be a good harbor, and from which,<sup>1</sup> it is probable, they named the place Portsmouth.—Here they incorporated themselves into a kind of body politic,<sup>2</sup> and chose Mr. Coddington to be their judge and chief magistrate.<sup>3</sup> This was the beginning of the second town in the colony of Rhode-Island; and in the same year, considerable numbers from several towns in the Massachusetts, came and joined with them; and so much were they increased, within the course of this whole year, that in the fore part of the next, they separated; and a part of them removed toward the southwestern end of the island, where the bay forms as it were a crescent into the land, and a small island stretching its length, between the two head-lands, leaves at each end a convenient entrance into a safe and beautiful harbor. On the shores of this harbor they now began a new settlement; and as they had named that at the other end of the island Ports-Mouth, from the narrow entrance of the harbor; so having found here another fine harbor, or port, they, for that reason, named this place New-Port. This town, thus began in the year 1639, was the third, in order of time, planted in the colony; but the exceed-

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(1) In the absence of more definite evidence, it may be doubted whether this name, as well as that of Newport, may not have been the transfer of a local name in Old England.

(2) "Bodie politick." Dated Jan. 7, 1638. Printed in the R. I. Col. Records, I. 52-53. John Clarke's signature on this compact is plainly writtē with a final *e*.

(3) "Judge." This office was "in imitation of the form of government which existed for a time among the Jews." (Knowles, p. 145).

ing fertility of its lands, its fine situation, the conveniency of its harbor, and affluent circumstances of its first inhabitants, all contributed to make it increase faster than any of the other, and to become, in a few years, the most considerable town in, and the metropolis of the colony.—Justice requires that I should here, once for the whole, acknowledge that I have borrowed a great part of this account of the first settlement of Rhode-Island, and some few other articles, made use of in the course of these papers, from the<sup>1</sup> Century Sermon of the late ingenious and worthy Mr. John Callender.

Four years<sup>2</sup> after the first coming to Providence, a settlement was began at a place about five miles southward from it,<sup>3</sup> called by the Indians Pawtuxet, where a fine fresh river, known by the same name, falls into the Narraganset Bay, and within the purchase Mr. Williams had made of the Indians.—This settlement was made by William Arnold, William Carpenter, Zechariah Rhodes, and William Harris, who all removed from Providence thither, and seem to be induced to make this remove for the sake of the fine natural meadows that were on both sides of the aforesaid river.—And here still remains a numerous posterity from each of these four first planters.

The next plantation, began within this colony, was at a place by the Indians called Shaw-o-met, now known by the name of Warwick.<sup>4</sup> Here a purchase was made of a tract of land, bounding northerly on Providence purchase,<sup>5</sup> and to extend about four miles and a half, south, and twenty miles west. This purchase was made in the beginning of the year

(1) Published in the "Collections of the R. I. Historical Society, IV.

(2) Instead of "four years," this should read "two years." It was in 1638.

(3) For the subsequent disputes as to boundaries by the Pawtuxet settlers, see Arnold's "Rhode Island," I. 174-75, 230-33, 429-38.

(4) See Fuller's "History of Warwick." Also the notes, appendices, etc., to Gorton's "Simplicities defence," edited by W. R. Staples. (In "Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society," II).

(5) "Along the bay from Gaspee point to Warwick neck." (Arnold's "Rhode Island," I. 176).

1643, of Myantonomo, by Randal Holdon,<sup>1</sup> John Wickes, Samuel Gorton,<sup>2</sup> John Greene,<sup>3</sup> Francis Weston, Richard Waterman, John Warner, Richard Carder, Sampson Shotton, Robert Potter, and William Woodale.<sup>4</sup> The settlement at this place, was began, as I have good reason to believe, a year or two earlier than this purchase of Myantonomo;<sup>5</sup> these lands being first purchased of Pomham, a petty sachem, who with his tribe were the possessors of it, and this purchase afterward assented to, and confirmed by Myantonomo, the principal sachem. Be this as it will, this was the beginning of the fourth town in the colony, planted by people half from Providence, <sup>6</sup> one from Rhode-Island, and the rest, perhaps, new-comers.

The first form of government <sup>7</sup> established by Mr. Williams, and the people at Providence, seems to have been no

(1) "Randall Holden." "Arnold's Rhode Island," I. 176.

(2) Samuel Gorton. He published in 1646 "Simplicities defence against seven-headed policy." (Edited by W. R. Staples, and reprinted in "Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society," II). New light is thrown on this singular character, by a posthumous work of the late Judge Brayton, "A defence of Samuel Gorton and the settlers of Shawomet," (Rhode Island Historical Tracts," No. 17.)

(3) John Greene was the ancestor, five generations back, of General Nathanael Greene.

(4) Only eleven names are here given. Gorton gives twelve names. ("Simplicities defence," p. 86). The twelfth is that of Nicholas Power. He never resided at Shawomet.

(5) About November, 1641, Gorton and others settled at Popoquinepaug (in the vicinity of the present Roger Williams Park). (Brayton's "Defence of Samuel Gorton," p. 73). "John Greene in October, 1642, purchased of Miantonomi (the deed being signed by this same Soccononocco) what is now the Spring Green Farm, called the Occupassuatuxet." (Brayton, p. 102).

(6) Those from Providence were Greene, Weston, Waterman and Warner; also Power, not named above. Instead of there being "one from Rhode Island," there were seven: (Gorton, Holden, Wickes, Carder, Shotton, Potter, and Woodale). This latter name is found in as many as eight variations of spelling.

(7) In the minute inventory of the records of the town of Providence, (made in 1678), may be traced the simple beginnings of government in this town. Appendix III.



more than a voluntary association, and compact, <sup>1</sup> that each individual should submit to, and be governed by the resolutions and determinations of the whole body: All public matters were transacted in their town-meetings, and all private disputes and controversies were also heard, adjudged, and finished there. They annually chose two officers, which were called town deputies; these had authority to keep the peace, to settle small disputes, to call town meetings, preside in them, and see their resolutions executed. And all new-comers, before they were admitted as inhabitants, were obliged to make a solemn promise, in the nature of an oath, in an open town-meeting, that "they would submit themselves, in active and passive obedience, to all such orders and agreements, as shall be made for the public good of the body, in an orderly way, by the major consent of the present inhabitants." <sup>2</sup> And by the form of engagement given by officers, <sup>3</sup> in the year 1647, after the colony had obtained a charter, <sup>4</sup> and established a body of laws, there is a plain allusion to this primitive government: The form runs thus; "You A. B. being called, and<sup>5</sup> chosen by the free vote and consent of the inhabitants of this<sup>6</sup> plantation, now orderly

(1) "That it was not the intention of Roger Williams, in seeking a refuge in the wilderness, to become the founder of a state, his own declaration proves." (Arnold's "Rhode Island," I. 97). Compare Williams's language, (Harris Commission Proceedings, Nov. 17, 1677):—"My soul's desire was to do the natives good." "Thus," says Professor Diman, "circumstances which he had not at first foreseen, caused a modification of his plan." ("Orations and Essays, p. 121).

(2) Dated Aug. 20, (1636). See Staples's "Annals of Providence," p. 39. Also in the R. I. Col. Records, I. 14. Governor Hopkins's version varies from the original in substituting the words, "submit themselves," for "subject ourselves."

(3) See the R. I. Col. Records, I. 150, where this form is given in full.

(4) It was known as the "patent of 1643."

(5) Several variations from this phraseology occur in this "form" as found in the manuscript Colony Records. These are given below.

For instance, "& chosen unto publick employmt and the office of . . . . by the free vote of ye inhabitants," etc.

(6) "province of Providence Plantations, now orderly mett."

met, unto the office of . . . . , do, in this<sup>1</sup> present assembly, engage yourself, faithfully and<sup>2</sup> truly to execute, all that is required from your office, in the body of laws agreed upon by the whole colony, so far forth as the nature and constitution of this plantation will admit. Also you are faithfully and truly<sup>3</sup> to execute, all that is required from your office in our town book, concerning our town affairs, and to do neither more, nor less,<sup>4</sup> in these respects, than this<sup>5</sup> town have, or shall authorize you to do, according to the best of your understanding."

The government, established by Mr. Coddington, and the people at Rhode-Island, appears to be nearly like that at Providence; for though they chose one chief magistrate, which they called by the name of governor and four others, called assistants; yet these seem like the deputies at Providence, to be vested only with some executive powers, while the principal authorities, both legislative and judicial, rested in the body of the people, when met together in town-meeting. And indeed, the authority of these town-meetings, at this time, and long afterwards, was very great, and might be compared to the power of the common people of Athens or Rome; for about the year 1653, an inhabitant of Newport, of very considerable note, was charged with a capital crime, and was brought before the town-meeting, there tried, and condemned to death, and the sentence immediately executed in their presence.

It being the resolution of those who came to Rhode-Island,<sup>6</sup> not to settle within the jurisdiction of any of the colonies that were already settled, (and) and they now considered themselves, and were considered by others, as a separate, and independent government, and continued so for several years. What

(1) "the present Assemblie."

(2) "& truly to the utmost of your power to execute."

(3) "to execute the comission comitted unto you and do hereby promise to do," etc.

(4) "in that respect."

(5) "then that w<sup>h</sup> the colonie have . . . . you to do."

(6) "Rhode Island;" i. e. Aquidneck.

chiefly moved them to the aforesaid resolution, of living in a separate manner, was their desire and intention to enjoy and to maintain an absolute liberty of conscience, and intire freedom in all religious matters. But after having lived some years in the neighbourhood of the Providence planters, and gained a certain knowledge of their principles and practices, they found that they had already established, and constantly and steadily maintained all the liberty and freedom they had been so desirous of, and had removed a second time to find. This union <sup>1</sup> of sentiments, and of intentions, of the most noble and generous kind, soon produced a coalition of the people of Providence, and of those at Rhode-Island, and an agreement, that they would unite and become one colony, and apply together to the crown, for a charter of incorporation. In consequence of this agreement, they jointly appointed Mr. Williams their agent, to go to England, and there solicit and conduct their affairs for them. Some time in the year <sup>2</sup> 1642, Mr. Williams sailed for England; and when he arrived there, found his native country involved in all the miseries of a furious civil war; carried on by the King on one side, and his Parliament on the other: But as the Parliament were masters of the English fleet, that, they supposed, gave them also the power of all the plantations abroad; therefore they had appointed Robert Earl of Warwick, president, and had joined a number of commissioners with him, and had given them power to take care of and transact all the plantation affairs. To these commissioners, therefore, did Mr. Williams now apply for a charter; and as Sir Henry Vane, with whom he was well acquainted, and seems to have had a close friendship, was one of them, through his assistance, as Mr. Williams afterward declared, he obtained his suit, and

(1) "This union." This was among the first of a series of coalitions and combinations which with the charter of 1663 crystallized into the "Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations."

(2) He set sail from New Amsterdam, June, 1643. Compare Winthrop's Journal, II. 117. He doubtless arrived in England in the midst of the campaign of Newbury, (Sept. 20, 1643,) in which the high-minded Lord Falkland fell.

received a charter of incorporation ; <sup>1</sup> which though its length must make tedious, yet as it is but little known, and is the first, and perhaps only one of its kind, I will give it to my readers at full length, viz.

“WHEREAS, by an ordinance of the Lords and Commons, now assembled in Parliament, bearing date the second<sup>2</sup> day of November, Anno Domini<sup>3</sup> 1643, Robert,<sup>4</sup> Earl of Warwick, is constituted, and ordained governor in chief, and lord high admiral of all those islands and other plantations inhabited or planted by, or belonging to any His Majesty the King of England’s subjects,<sup>5</sup> (or which hereafter may be inhabited and and planted by, or<sup>6</sup> belong to them) within the bounds, and upon the coasts of America. And whereas the said lords have thought fit, and thereby ordained, that Philip<sup>7</sup> Earl of Pembroke, Edward Earl of Manchester, William Viscount Say and Seal, Philip Lord of Whar-ton, John Lord Rolle<sup>8</sup>, members of the house of Peers. Sir Gilbert Gerrard,<sup>9</sup> Baronet, Sir Arthur Haslerig,<sup>10</sup> Baronet, Sir

- (1) Dated March 14, 1643-4. But three months before this grant, a charter, (commonly known as the “Narragansett patent”), was issued to the Massachusetts government, adding to its territory lands which included all of what was afterwards incorporated as “Rhode Island.” See Aspinwall’s “Remarks on the Narragansett patent” (1862). Mr. Aspinwall concludes his comprehensive examination of the validity of this instrument by saying (p. 40); “I have not discovered a single instance in which the Welde Patent ever found countenance from the English authorities, either at home or in this country.”

Yet this Narragansett patent, (issued Dec. 10, 1643), expressly reserves all lands “in present possession held and enjoyed by any of His Majesty’s Protestant subjects,” (printed in the *New England Historical and Genealogical Register*, XI. 41-43), while no similar reservation is found in the Providence patent.

Governor Hopkins’s version varies from that of the late Judge Staples, (“Proceedings of the first General Assembly,” p. viii-ix) in the particulars below cited. The original is unaccountably absent from the State Archives.

- (2) [2d].  
 (3) “Anno Dom.”  
 (4) Robert [,].  
 (5) (or . . . . . them)  
 (6) “belonging  
 (7) Philip [,] Earl of Pembroke [;]  
 (8) John, Lord Roberts.”  
 (9) “Gerard.”  
 (10) “Haselrige.” He was afterwards a warm supporter of the Connecticut claims on Rhode Island territory. (“Publications of the Narragansett Club,” VI. 255, 290; also Knowles, p. 259).

Henry Vane, jun.<sup>1</sup> Knight, Sir Benjamin<sup>2</sup> Rudyard, Knight, John Pim,<sup>3</sup> Oliver Cromwell,<sup>4</sup> Dennis Bond, Miles Corbet, Cornelius Holland, Samuel Vassal,<sup>5</sup> John Rolle, and William Spurstow,<sup>6</sup> Esqrs.<sup>7</sup> members of the House of Commons, should be commissioners, to join in aid and assistance with the said earl. And whereas, for the<sup>8</sup> better government and defence, it is thereby ordained, that the aforesaid governor<sup>9</sup> and commissioners, or the greater number of them, shall<sup>10</sup> have power, and authority, from time to time, to nominate, appoint, and constitute all such subordinate governors, counsellors,<sup>11</sup> commanders, officers, and agents, as they shall judge to be best affected, and most fit and serviceable<sup>12</sup> for the said islands and plantations; and to provide for, order and dispose all things, which they shall,<sup>13</sup> from time to time, find most<sup>14</sup> advantageous for the said plantations; and for the better security of the owners and inhabitants thereof,<sup>15</sup> to assign, ratify, and confirm, so much of their afore-mentioned authority and power, and in such manner, and to such persons as they shall<sup>16</sup> judge to be fit for the better governing and preserving of the said plantations and islands, from open violences<sup>17</sup> and private disturbances<sup>18</sup> and distractions.<sup>19</sup> And whereas there is a tract of land in the continent of America aforesaid, called by the Name of the Narraganset<sup>20</sup> Bay, border-

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(1) "Jr."

(2) "Rudyerd."

(3) "Pym." He with the Earl of Manchester, (then Lord Kimbolton), Haselrige, (or Hazelrig), John Hampden, and one other, comprised the "five members" whom Charles I attempted to arrest, Jan. 4, 1642.

(4) With the Lord Protector, Roger Williams was on terms of "close discourse." ("Publications of the Narragansett Club," VI. 307).

(5) "Vassall."

(6) "Spurstowe."

(7) "Esq'sr."

(8) "for the better governing and preserving of the said plantations, it is," etc.

(9) "governor."?

(10) "should."

(11) "councils."

(12) "serviceable to govern the said islands and plantations.

(13) "should."

(14) "most fit and advantageous."

(15) [;].

(16) "should."

(17) "violence."

(18) "disturbances."

(19) Here is affixed the seal, "Robert, Warwick, L. s."

(20) "Narragansetts."



ing<sup>1</sup> northward and northeast on the patent<sup>2</sup> of the Massachusetts, east and south-east on Plymouth patent, south on the ocean, and on the west and north-west by the Indians called<sup>3</sup> Nahigganneneks, alias Narragansets; the whole tract extending about<sup>4</sup> twenty-five English miles, unto the Pequot River and country.<sup>5</sup>

“And whereas divers well affected and industrious English inhabitants of the towns of Providence, Portsmouth, and Newport, in the tract aforesaid,<sup>6</sup> have adventured to make a nearer neighbourhood and society with the great body of the Narragansets,<sup>7</sup> which may in time, by the blessing of God upon their<sup>8</sup> endeavours, lay a sure<sup>9</sup> foundation of happiness to all America. And have also purchased, and are purchasing of and amongst the said natives, some other places,<sup>10</sup> which may be convenient both for plantations, and also for building of ships,<sup>11</sup> supply of<sup>12</sup> pipe staves, and other<sup>13</sup> merchandise. And whereas the said English, have represented their desire<sup>14</sup> to the said earl, and commissioners, to have their hopeful beginnings<sup>15</sup> approved and confirmed, by granting unto them a free charter of civil incorporation and government; that they may order and govern their plantation in such a manner as to maintain justice and peace,

(1) “north.”

(2) “of Massachusetts.”

(3) “inhabited by Indians called Narrogunneucks.”

(4) “twenty and five.”

(5) It will be noticed that this patent prescribes no definite bounds on the west. That was delayed until the charter of King Charles II, in 1663, when “Pawcatuck River” and “a strait line drawn due north” were made the western bounds.

(6) Warwick is not here mentioned by name. It was however represented in the first action taken under the patent, in 1647. See R. I. Col. Records, I. 148.

(7) “Narragansetts.”

(8) “endeavors.”

(9) “surer.”

(10) “some other places.” Warwick, Pawtuxet, Kingstown, etc.

(11) “building ships.” It is surprising to note how long time was suffered to elapse before the colonists availed themselves of their marine opportunities. “Until the seventeenth century was waning to its close, no sloops or schooners, save those of Massachusetts or New York, enlivened the waters of the bay.” Dorr’s “Providence,” p. 117.

(12) “pipe-staves.”

(13) “merchandize.”

(14) “desires.”

(15) “beginning.”

both among<sup>1</sup> themselves, and towards all men with whom they shall have to do. In due consideration of the said <sup>2</sup>premises, the said Robert Earl of Warwick, <sup>3</sup>governor in chief, and lord high admiral of the said plantations, and the greater number of the said commissioners, whose names and seals are here <sup>4</sup>under-written and subjoined, out of a desire to encourage the good beginnings of the <sup>5</sup>said planters, do, by the authority of the aforesaid ordinance<sup>6</sup> of the lords and commons, give, grant, and confirm, to the aforesaid inhabitants of the towns of Providence, Portsmouth, and Newport, a free an [sic] absolute <sup>7</sup>charter of incorporation, to be known by the <sup>8</sup>name of *The Incorporation of Providence-Plantations, in the <sup>9</sup>Narraganset-Bay, New-England.*<sup>10</sup>—Together with full power and authority,<sup>11</sup> to rule themselves and such others as shall hereafter inhabit within any part of the said tract of land, by such a form of civil government, as by voluntary consent of all, or the greater<sup>12</sup> part of them, they shall find most <sup>13</sup>suitable to their estate and condition; and, for that end, to make and ordain such civil laws and constitutions, and to inflict such punishment upon transgressors, and for execution thereof, so to place and displace officers of justice, as they, or the greatest part of them, shall by free consent agree unto. *Provided nevertheless*, that the said laws, constitutions, and punishments, for the civil government of the said plantations,<sup>14</sup> be conformable to the laws of England, so far as the nature and constitution of the place<sup>15</sup> will admit. And always reserving to the said earl and commissioners, and their successors, power and authority for to dispose the general government of that, as it

(1) "amongst."

(2) "the premises."

(3) "governor."

(4) "under written."

(5) "the said *plantations*."

(6) "of lords and commons."

(7) "charter of civil incorporation."

(8) "name of Incorporation," etc.

(9) "Narragansett Bay in New England."

(10) It will be noticed that the name of Providence, here heading the official title of the colony, afterwards resigned to Rhode Island the first place in the official title of "*Rhode Island and Providence Plantations*." (See the charter of 1663).

(11) "to govern and rule themselves."

(12) "greatest."

(13) "most *serviceable* to their estates."

(14) "plantation."

(15) "of *that* place."

stands in relation<sup>1</sup> to the rest of the plantations in America, as they shall conceive<sup>2</sup> from time to time, most conducing to the general good of the said plantations,<sup>3</sup> the honour<sup>4</sup> of his majesty, and the service of the state.<sup>5</sup> And the said earl and commissioners do further authorize, that the aforesaid inhabitants; for the better transacting of their publick<sup>6</sup> affairs, to make and use a publick<sup>7</sup> seal, as the known seal of Providence-Plantations, in the Narraganset-Bay, in New-England. In testimony whereof the said Robert Earl of Warwick, and commissioners, have here unto set their hands and seals, the fourteenth<sup>8</sup> day of March, in the nineteenth year of the reign of our sovereign lord King Charles, and in the year of our Lord God, 1643.

<sup>9</sup>ROBERT WARWICK,  
PHILIP PEMBROKE,  
<sup>10</sup>SAY AND SEAL,  
<sup>11</sup>P. WHARTON,  
<sup>12</sup>ARTHUR HASLERIG,  
COR. HOLLAND,  
H. VANE,  
SAM. VASSAL,  
JOHN ROLLE,  
MILES CORBET,  
<sup>13</sup>W. SPURSTOW."

Mr. Williams having obtained this charter, how long it was before he returned is uncertain; and as there is no particular form of government established by it, nor no officers, or

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(1) "in reference to."

(2) "as they shall *commissionate*."

(3) "plantation."

(4) "honor."

(5) "of *this* state."

(6) "public."

(7) "public."

(8) "Seventeenth," says Elton. ["Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society," IV. 225-26. Yet Governor Hopkins is correct. Mr. Arnold in 1846-47, examined the official manuscript of the charter preserved in the British State Paper office, at London, and found the date recorded as "14th March." (Arnold's "Rhode Island," I. 114. *Note*).

(9) "Robert Warwick." His seal does not occur here, but as indicated above.

(10) "William, Say and Seal."

(11) "Philip Wharton."

(12) "Haselrige."

(13) "Spurstow's signature does not appear on the copy in the Colony records.



offices, named or appointed, but the whole frame of government left to be modelled and established by the people here, it doubtless took much time before they could agree upon and settle a method that was pleasing to the major part of the people in all the four towns. For although Warwick be not named in the charter, yet, before the government was formed under it, that was become a town, and was named Warwick, in honor of the above-named Robert Earl of Warwick, and had, all along, under that charter, an equal privilege, in all respects, with either of the three towns that were named in it. The form of government at length agreed upon, was this. The freemen of the whole colony, chose annually one chief officer, which they called president, and eight assistants, two in each town; and each of the four towns, chose six representatives, at that time called commissioners: These had power, when regularly met together, to make such laws as they thought necessary; but these laws, thus made, were to be sent to each town-meeting, and there publicly read, and after due time was had for deliberation, the question was put, whether what had been then read should be received as a law, or not.—If this question passed in the negative, in the major part of the towns, the law in question was made void; if in the affirmative it was established. From this practice, came the common story, that some towns had heretofore repealed acts of the General Assembly. By this it appears, that the people did not trust the whole legislative authority, even to their own representatives, but kept at least a negative voice in their own hands. The president and assistants had the executive power, were judges of the courts of law, and kept the peace: The president sat as speaker in the assemblies of the representatives, and called them together on emergencies, was chairman in the courts of judicature, and all processes issued in his name. There was also chosen, yearly, a general recorder, and a general serjeant; the office of the first, was to make regular entries of all the doings of the assembly of representatives, and send copies to each town, and to execute the office of clerk to the courts of judicature. The duty of the

latter was the same as sheriff at this day. The assistants in each town, besides keeping the peace, and determining small controversies, had the power of presiding in all town-meetings and calling them on all emergent occasions. Each town also chose every year a town clerk, who entered all that was done in their town meetings, recorded all deeds, and land evidences, and all other public matters transacted in the town. They also choose six persons, called a town council, who had the powers of a court of probate; of granting licences to inn-keepers and retailers; and of the poor. A serjeant they also chose, whose office was that of a town sheriff.

The form of government being settled, they now prepared such laws as were necessary to enforce the due administration of it; but the popular approbation their laws must receive, before they were valid, made this a work of time; However, they were so industrious in it, that in the month of May 1647, they completed a regular body of laws,<sup>1</sup> taken chiefly from the laws of England, adding a very few of their own forming,<sup>2</sup> which the circumstances and exigencies of their present condition required. These laws, for securing of right, for determining controversies, for preserving order, suppressing vice, and punishing offenders, were, at least, equal to the laws of any of the neighbouring colonies; and infinitely exceeded those of all other Christian countries at that time, in this particular,—that they left the conscience free, and did not punish men for worshipping God in the way, they were persuaded, he required.—Here, although it be a departure from the order of time, I will draw into one view what yet remains to be said upon that liberty of conscience first allowed here. All Christians, from the beginning of the Reformation to these times, when they were disturbed, and oppressed by the governing powers they lived under, on account of their religious principles or practices, had

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(1) Printed in the R. I. Col. Records, I. 156-208.

(2) See also Staples's pamphlet, "The proceedings of the first General Assembly of the Incorporation of Providence Plantations, and the code of laws," 1647. (Published 1847).

claimed this natural right, *a liberty of conscience in the worship of God*.—And many of them had, with much learning, and great strength of reason, shewn, that it was a right they were naturally and justly intitled to; and of which the civil magistrate could not deprive them, without departing from his proper duty and office.<sup>1</sup> But all of them, when they came to be possessed of power, had denied that indulgence to those who differed from them in religious sentiments, that they had pleaded so powerfully for when they suffered themselves; and this had constantly and universally been the case throughout Christendom, for many hundred years.—And Roger Williams justly claims the honor of having been the first legislator<sup>2</sup> in the world; in its latter ages, that fully and effectually provided for and established a free, full, and absolute liberty of conscience. This beneficent principle he made the foundation, and, as it were, the chief corner stone of his infant colony; this was made the test of admission, to all new comers; this was the chief cause that united the inhabitants of Rhode-Island and those of Providence, and made them one people and one colony. It was often objected to Mr. Williams, that such great liberty in religious matters, tended to licentiousness, and every kind of disorder: To such objections I will give the answer he himself made, in his own words, for thereby his real sentiments may be best discovered.

“*To the Town of Providence.*”<sup>3</sup>

“Loving Friends and Neighbours,

“It pleaseth God yet to continue this great liberty of our

(1) “As a practical working-day principle, it was almost inevitable that it [the idea of toleration] should only be the birth of a considerable and painful experience, As new sects were evolved, and each took its turn of bearing persecution, each necessarily claimed for itself the right to be; and so, each adding one new demand in that direction, the way was gradually prepared for the idea of general, and equal, liberty for all.” Dexter’s “As to Roger Williams,” p. 109. See also Appendix I, of this work.

(2) This claim has been well supported. See however Appendix II.

(3) The date of this letter is sometime in January, 1654–5. It is found in the Providence Records, and is reprinted in Narragansett Club Pub., VI, 278–79.

(4) The letter as printed in this Narragansett Club volume, begins here.

town meetings, for which, we ought to be humbly thankful, and to improve these liberties to the praise of the Giver, and to the peace and welfare of the town and colony, without our own private ends.—I thought it my duty, to present you with this my impartial testimony, and answer to a paper sent you the other day from my brother,<sup>1</sup>—*That it is blood-guiltiness, and against the rule of the gospel, to execute judgment upon transgressors, against the private or publick weal.* That ever I should speak or write a tittle that tends to such an infinite liberty of conscience, is a mistake ; and which I have ever disclaimed and abhorred. To prevent such mistakes, I at present shall only propose this case.—There goes many a ship to sea, with many a<sup>2</sup> hundred souls in one ship, whose weal and wo is common; and is a true picture of a commonwealth, or an<sup>3</sup> human combination or society. It hath fallen out sometimes, that both Papists and Protestants, Jews and Turks may be embarked into one ship. Upon which supposal, I do<sup>4</sup> affirm, that all the liberty of conscience that ever I pleaded for, turns upon these two hinges, that none of the Papists, Protestants, Jews or Turks, be forced to come to the ship's prayers or worship; nor,<sup>5</sup> secondly, compelled from their own particular prayers or worship, if they practise any. I further add, that I never denied that, notwithstanding this liberty the commander of this ship ought to command the ship's course; yea, and also to command that justice, peace, and sobriety, be kept and practised, both among the seamen and all the passengers.<sup>6</sup> If any seamen refuse to perform their service, or passengers to pay their freight;—if any refuse to help in person or purse, towards<sup>7</sup> the common charges, or defence;—if any refuse to obey the common laws and orders of the ship, concerning their common peace and preservation; if any shall mutiny and rise up against their commanders, and officers;—if any shall<sup>8</sup> preach or write, that there ought to be no commanders, nor<sup>9</sup> officers, because they are all equal in Christ, therefore no masters, nor officers, no laws, nor orders, no corrections nor punishments—I say, I never denied, but in such cases, whatever is pretended, the commander or commanders may judge, resist, compel, and punish such transgressors, according to their

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(1) Who this "brother" was is uncertain.

(2) "many hundred," in the Narragansett Club Publication copy.

(3) "a human combination."

(4) "I affirm."

(5) "nor compelled."

(6) "any *of* the seamen."

(7) "towards."

(8) "should."

(9) "or."

déserts and merits. This, if seriously and honestly minded, may, if it so please the Father of lights, let in some light, to such as willingly shut not their eyes.—I remain studious of our common peace and liberty,<sup>1</sup>—

ROGER WILLIAMS.”

This religious liberty was not only asserted in words, but uniformly adhered to, and practised; for in the year 1656, soon after the Quakers<sup>2</sup> made their first appearance in New-England, and at which most of the colonies were greatly alarmed and offended: Those at that time called the Four united Colonies,<sup>3</sup> which were the Massachusetts, Plymouth, Connecticut, and New-Haven, wrote to this colony, to join with them in taking effectual methods to suppress them, and prevent their pernicious doctrines being spread and propagated in the country.---To this request the Assembly of this colony gave the following worthy answer: “We shall strictly adhere to the foundation principle on which this colony was first settled; to wit, that every man who submits peaceably to the civil authority, may peaceably worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, without molestation.”<sup>4</sup> And not to the peo-

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(1) It is the doctrine, says Professor Diman, “not that men of various beliefs should be *tolerated* by the civil power, but the far broader and more fruitful principle that the civil power has nothing whatever to do with religious belief, save when it leads to some actual violation of social order.” (Diman’s “Orations and Essays,” p. 127). This, says Professor Tyler, “has the moral and literary harmonies of a classic. As such, it deserves to be forever memorable in our American prose.” (Tyler’s “History of American Literature,” I, 263).

(2) The first Quakers arrived in New England in July, 1656.

(3) The “New England confederacy” was formed May 19, 1643, of the colonies of “Massachusetts Bay,” “New Plymouth,” Connecticut,” and “New Haven.” The Providence and Rhode Island settlements had as yet no organization and were not invited to join in its formation. Subsequent applications for admission were refused. The confederacy continued until 1684.

(4) Under date of March 13, 1657-8, the following language was used: “Now, whereas, freedom of different consciences, to be protected from inforcements was the principle ground of our charter, \* \* \* which freedom we still prize as the greatest happines that men can posess in this world,” \* \* “we shall” \* \* [so act] “that therewithall there may



ple of the neighbouring governments only, was this principle owned; but it was asserted in their applications to the ruling powers in the mother country; for in the year 1659, in an address of this colony to Richard Cromwell, then Lord Protector of England, Scotland, and Ireland, there is this paragraph,<sup>1</sup>—

“May it please your highness to know, that this poore collony of Providence-Plantations, mostly consists of a birth and breeding of the providence of the Most High.—Wee beinge an out-cast people, formerly from our mother nations, in the bishops’ daies; and since from the rest of the New English over zealous collonys, our whole frame being much licke unto the present frame and constitution of our deareist mother England; bearinge with the severall judgments, and consciences, each of other in all the townes of our colonie, the which our neighbour collonys doe not; which is the only cause of their great offence against us.”

But as every human felicity has some attendant misfortune, so the people’s enjoyment of very great liberty, hath ever been found to produce some disorders, factions, and parties amongst them; and for this evil there is no remedy: But the mischiefs that would flow from it, must be averted by the personal virtue and steady perseverance of the wise and good among them; and no longer than a sufficient number of such can be found, to guide and to withstand the headlong passions of the giddy multitude, can liberty be supported.<sup>2</sup> The mischiefs of parties, and of factions, the natural consequence of great liberty, made an early appearance in this colony: But there were then found

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be noe damage or infringement of that chiefe principle in our charter concerninge freedom of consciences.” (R. I. Col. Records, I. 378-79).

(1) Printed in R. I. Col. Records, I. 414-15. The version here given of this address follows that of the Colony Records, rather than that of Governor Hopkins.

(2) The sound common sense, as well as political insight, evidenced by this remark is noteworthy; and may be compared with another utterance of Gov. Hopkins, published at about the same time with this chapter of his history. “Absolute liberty,” he says, “is, perhaps, incompatible with any kind of government. The safety resulting from society, and the advantage of just and equal laws, hath caused men to forego some part of their natural liberty, and submit to government.” [“The rights of colonies examined,” by Stephen Hopkins, (Providence, 1765), p. 3].

also, patriots enough in it to prevent their malevolent effects.—(May the writer of these papers be permitted here to call upon the patriots of the present age, to arise and imitate their great ancestors, and exert themselves in saving their unhappy country from parties, from factions, and from ruin<sup>1</sup>).—And as the best and most useful men have ever, in all free states been the subject of popular clamor and censure, so we find that Mr. Williams did not escape the rude attacks of the licentious tongue of freedom: However, in imitation of a noble Greek,<sup>2</sup> he thanks God, that he had been the author of that very liberty, by which they dare to abuse him; and expostulates with the people in these words,<sup>3</sup>—

“I am told that I am a traitor—<sup>4</sup>and as good as banished by yourselves;—<sup>5</sup>that both sides wished I might have never landed here again, that so, the fire of contention might have had no stop in burning.”—“I, at last, was forced to say, they might well silence all complaints, If I once began to complain, who was so importunately drawn<sup>6</sup> from my employment, and sent so vast a distance from my family, do do[sic] your work of a costly and high nature, for so long a time; and there left to starve, or steal, or beg, or borrow. But blessed be God, who gave me favor to borrow one while, and to work<sup>7</sup> another, and thereby to pay your debts, [there] and to come over, with your credit and honor, as your agent.<sup>8</sup> Yet I may say you seem to have provided a sponge to wipe off all your scores and debts.<sup>9</sup> But gentlemen, blessed be God who faileth not, and blessed be his name for his

(1) “Factions.” In 1765, when this part of the chapter was printed, both the Hopkins “faction” and the Ward men were having their eyes opened to the foolish criminality of this factional strife which had nearly rent the colony.

(2) “A noble Greek.” Governor Hopkins’s allusion is not wholly plain.

(3) A letter to the town of Providence, written in August, 1654. (Narragansett Club Pub., VI. 263-64).

(4) The quotation begins at the words, “And as good as banished.”

(5) “for so many days and weeks and months together.”

(6) “Unfortunately fetched and drawn,” says the Narragansett Club version.

(7) He himself tells us that he gave lessons in language, reading Dutch to the Secretary of the council, (John Milton), and other languages to other pupils of his. (Narragansett Club Pub., VI. 261-62.)

(8) “as an agent from you.”

(9) “a sponge to wipe your scores and debts in England.”

wonderful Providence,<sup>1</sup> by which alone this town and colony, and the grand cause of truth and freedom of conscience, hath been upheld to this day; and blessed be his name who hath again quenched so much of the fire of contention among his brethren."<sup>2</sup>

It must be confessed, the historians and ministers of the neighbouring colonies, in all their writings for a long time, represented the inhabitants of this colony as a company of people who lived without any order, and quite regardless of all religion; and this principally, because they allowed an unlimited liberty of conscience, which was then interpreted to be profane licentiousness, as though religion could not subsist without the support of human laws, and Christians must cease to be so, if they suffered any of different sentiment to live in the same country with them. Nor is it to be wondered at,<sup>3</sup> if many among them that first came hither, being tinctured with the same bitter spirit, should create much disturbance; nor that others, when got clear of the fear of censure and punishment, should relax too much, and behave as though they were become indifferent about religion itself. With people of both these characters, the fathers of this colony had to contend: On one hand, to guard and to maintain that sacred liberty and freedom they had established; and on the other, to prevent and suppress that licentiousness too naturally flowing from it. For quieting and healing the breaches and animosities occasioned by these contrary extremes, and arising from other causes also, Sir Henry Vane sent a letter<sup>4</sup> to the colony, dated the 8th of February 1653,<sup>5</sup> in which he complains of their disorders, ex-

(1) "Providences."

(2) "So much of our fires hitherto."

(3) "Nor is it to be wondered at." Mr. Callender, also, in his "Century Sermon," remarks: "It may be worth our while to consider, whether some inconveniences do not naturally, or have not, in fact, followed or attended our constitution." Yet he adds: "These things will be no good objection against liberty of conscience, because infinitely greater evils necessarily follow on persecution of conscience[']s sake." ("Collections of the R. I. Historical Society," IV. 164-66.

(4) Printed in R. I. Col. Records, I. 285-86.

(5) Rather, 1653-4.



horts them to peace and unanimity, and severely rebukes them for the ill use they make of their great liberty : To this letter the town of Providence returned an answer<sup>1</sup> in Mr. Williams's writing as followeth<sup>2</sup> :

“The first beginning of this Providence colony [was] occasioned by the banishment of some from the Massachusetts —\* \* \* We were in complete order until [we were greatly disturbed and distracted by the ambition and covetousness of some, who] wanting that publick self-denying spirit, which you commend to us in your letter, [occasioned our general disturbance and distraction].—Possibly some of ourselves are grown wanton and too active; for we have long drank of the [sweet] cup of as great liberty as any people that we can hear of under the whole heaven—We have not only been free from the iron yokes of wolfish bishops, but have sitten quiet, and dry from the streams of blood spilt by the civil war in our native country. We have not felt the new chains of the Presbyterian tyrants, nor \* \* \* been consumed by the over-zealous fire of those called godly Christian Magistrates. \* \* \* We have almost forgotten what tythes are; yea, and taxes too; either to church or common-wealth. [We have also enjoyed other sweet privileges, and such, you know, are very powerful] to render the best of men wanton and forgetful.—[We hope you shall have no more occasion to complain of the men of Providence town, or Providence colony; but that when we are gone and rotten, our posterity, and children after us, shall read in our town records, your pious and favourable letters and loving-kindness to us and this our answer and real endeavors after peace and righteousness.”

And in this age it seemed to be doubted whether a civil government could be kept up and supported without some particular mode of religion was established by its laws, and guarded by penalties and tests : And for determining this doubt, by an actual trial, appears to have been the principal motive with King Charles the second, for granting free liberty of conscience

(1)Printed in R. I. Col. Records, I. 287–88.

(2)Dated August 27, 1654. R. I. Col. Records, I. 287–89. The latter version varies widely from this in spelling, in the order of sentences, etc. See the words above bracketed. The spelling of Governor Hopkins's version is not here altered. The letter is reprinted in full, later in this volume.

to the people of this colony, by his charter<sup>1</sup> of 1663,—in which he makes use of these words:<sup>2</sup>

“That they might hold forth a lively experiment, that a most flourishing civil state may stand, and best be maintained, and that amongst our English subjects, with a full liberty in religious concerns. And that true piety, rightly grounded on gospel principles, will give the best and greatest security to sovereignty, and will lay in the hearts of men the strongest obligations to true loyalty.”

This great experiment hath been made, and hath fully answered the expectations of the beneficent royal mind that proposed it; and it hath fully appeared, that a flourishing civil state, and the most unstained loyalty, may stand without the help of any religious party tests to support them; and that the Christian religion is as little indebted to human laws for its support, as it is to human inventions, for the purity of its morals, and the sublimity of its doctrines.<sup>3</sup> And Christian societies, in this colony

(1)The charter is dated July 8, 1663. It is in R. I. Col. Records, II. 1-21.

The striking liberality of this charter is the more surprising when it is remembered that it was granted by a Stuart. Yet, says Hallam, “His aim was liberty rather than power, it was that immunity from control and censure in which men of his character place a great part of their happiness. For some years he had cared very little about enhancing his prerogatives.” (“Constitutional history of England,” ch. II). And it will be remembered that in his “declaration from Breda,” dated April 14, 1660, he “promised to grant liberty of conscience, so that no man should be disquieted or called in question for differences of opinion which do not disturb the peace of the kingdom.”

Yet these facts do not detract from the signal value of the services of Dr. John Clarke, through whose sagacious endeavors and untiring efforts, the charter was obtained.

(2)The language here quoted from the charter is found also in an address, “humble,” as the charter itself indicates, presented to the king sometime in the previous year, (1662), by Dr. Clarke, in the behalf of the people of Rhode Island. [R. I. Col. Records, I. 485.] This is only one instance going to show to whom the colony was indebted for the minute details and animating spirit of this beneficent charter. In the Colony Records, it begins thus: “*That it is much on their hearts (if they may be permitted) to hold,*” etc.

(3)“The Puritan commonwealth,” says Dr. G. E. Ellis, “after a resolute struggle against the successive shocks, personal and practical, which its essential elements invited, as well as were sure to encounter, yielded

have not, as Mr. Neal expresses it,<sup>1</sup> "crumbled to pieces," but have kept together, and behaved as well as those who have lived under the severest penal laws; and those of all the various denominations amongst Protestants, have lived here in peace and love, and have ever shewn more kindness and charity one for another, than hath commonly been found amongst brethren of the same communion in the neighbouring governments. And as equal liberty and protection hath been all along allowed to every society, this hath prevented any emulation amongst them for superiority and power; but hath excited one of a much more laudable nature, that is, which should adorn their profession most, by practising every Christian virtue and duty. But long experience hath at last convinced all men, that religious liberty is not incompatible with civil government, and the peace and welfare of mankind; and therefore that perfect liberty of conscience, first began by Roger Williams, and first practised in his little town of Providence,<sup>2</sup> hath spread itself, and is at this day established, in some degree, in every part of the British dominions.

To return to the order of time from which I have digressed.—The first church formed at Providence by Mr. Williams,<sup>3</sup> and others, seems to have been on the model of the Con-

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even then only gradually, though I can hardly add gracefully, to a steady modification of its original theory." "Nothing but perfect freedom, absolute soul-liberty for the individual can make the process [of government] safe on the trial." ("Lowell Institute lectures on the early history of Massachusetts," p. 124, 126).

(1) Neal's "History of New England," I. 143.

(2) "The compact," says Professor Diman, "signed by the Pilgrims in the cabin of the Mayflower, has been praised as the earliest attempt to institute a government on the basis of the general good; surely the covenant subscribed by the settlers of Providence deserves a place beside it as a first embodiment in an actual experiment of the great principle of unrestricted religious liberty. In either case the settlements were small and the immediate results were unimportant; but the principles were world-wide in their application." ("Orations and essays," p. 122).

(3) Governor Hopkins has already remarked, (p. 19): "This small company Mr. Williams formed into a church." How far any attempt at organization was at first carried is not quite clear. Governor Winthrop, writing

gregational churches in the other New-England colonies. But it did not continue long in this form; for most of its members, very soon embraced the principles and practices of the Baptists; and some time earlier than 1639, gathered and formed a church at Providence, of that society, the principal members<sup>1</sup> of which

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in December, 1638, (Journal, I. 340), speaks of "religious meetings" as held at Providence, "upon the week days," as well as on Sunday. Knowles, the earliest of Williams's biographers, remarks: "It does not appear that there was, at first, any organization into a distinct church." (Memoir of Roger Williams, p. 162). Yet it is obvious, as pointed out by Mr. Upham, that they still considered themselves "the minister of this [the Salem] church, and a chosen band of his faithful flock." ("Second century lecture," Salem, 1829, by Charles Wentworth Upham, p. 44). "Those," says Rev. Dr. Hague, "who had been members of the church in Salem would naturally regard him as their pastor still." (Historical discourse, First Baptist Church, Providence, 1839, p. 23-24).

Besides Williams, himself, Thomas James, one of Williams's twelve original companions, was also "an ordained preacher," (Arnold's "Rhode Island," I. 107), and Mr. Blackstone, a clergyman of the Church of England, was accustomed, says Gov. Hopkins, "frequently to come to Providence, to preach the gospel." (See p. 25). Governor Hopkins placed the date of the organization of the church with its present distinctive principles as at "some time earlier than 1639" (see above), and this agrees with the entry in Winthrop's Journal, I. 352-53. The letter of Rev. Mr. Peter, of the Salem church, also (see p. 57-58), dated July 1, 1639, is confirmatory of it.

- (1) Mr. Williams's name is not mentioned in this list by Governor Hopkins. Governor Winthrop remarks, (I. 352-53), under date of March 16, 1638-9, that Mr. Williams "was rebaptized by one Holyman, a poor man late of Salem. Then Mr. Williams rebaptized him and some ten more." He, however, left "the church a few months after its constitution." (Hague's "Historical discourse on the First Baptist Church in Providence," p. 88).

"The fact is," says Rev. Dr. Caldwell, "Williams was a high-churchman. He believed in apostolic succession. But the line was broken." [Article in *Baptist Quarterly*, VI. 405.] Compare Williams's own language in 1652: "I commend the pious endeavors of any (professing ministry or not) to doe good to the soules of all men as we have opportunitie. But that any of the ministers spoken of are furnished with true Apostolicall Commission (Matth. 28, [19-20]) I see not." [Narragansett Club Pub., IV. 371].

"But with all this," adds Dr. Caldwell, "he was a Baptist," [in his belief as to the ordinance]. Compare his letter to John Winthrop, the younger, Dec. 10, 1659, [Narragansett Club Pub., VI. 188.]

were William Wickenden,<sup>1</sup> the first elder, Chadd Brown,<sup>2</sup> Thomas Olney,<sup>3</sup> Gregory Dexter,<sup>4</sup> John Throckmorton,<sup>5</sup> Ezekiel Holliman, Stukely Westcott, &c. That this church was begun as early as I have placed it, is evident from a letter of the famous Hugh Peters,<sup>6</sup> minister of Salem, to the church at Dorchester, dated the first of the fifth month, 1639, in which he writes,<sup>7</sup>

“Reverend and dearly beloved in the Lord.—

WE thought it our bounden duty to acquaint you with the names of such persons as have had the great censure passed upon them, in this our church, with the reasons thereof. \* \*

\* Roger Williams, and his wife, John Throckmorton,<sup>8</sup> and

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Amid all this conflicting testimony, there is perhaps nothing more to the point, than Professor Diman's statement:—

“With his religious belief,” says Professor Diman, there was very little change. He was a sturdy, uncompromising *separatist* when he renounced the communion of the Church of England, and such he remained to the day of his death.” “Having been for a brief period connected with the Baptists, he renounced their communion, and lived for the rest of his days isolated from all visible church fellowship.” (“Orations and essays,” p. 134).

- (1) William Wickenden. Gov. Hopkins was a descendant from Mr. Wickenden, in the third generation.
- (2) Chad Brown, (not “Chadd Brown,” as here spelled). Nicholas Brown, the benefactor of Brown University, was a descendant from him in the fourth generation.
- (3) Thomas Olney. He came from Salem in the year 1639.
- (4) Gregory Dexter. The widow of his son Stephen, by a second marriage, became the grandmother of Gov. Hopkins. These four men, Wickenden, Brown, Olney and Dexter, served at various times as pastor of the church.
- (5) Messrs Throckmorton, (or Throgmorton), Holliman, Olney, and Westcott (or Westcott) were all from Salem and were among Mr. Williams's twelve companions in the original settlement of Providence in 1636; and Throckmorton had come in the same ship with him from England. (Winthrop, I. 50).
- (6) See the very full examination of Peter's career by the late Mr. Charles W. Upham, in his “Second century lecture of the First Church,” Salem, 1829, p. 13–27. Also the “Postscript,” on the “character of Hugh Peters.” (11 pages), reprinted from the *Christian Register*.
- (7) This letter is printed in full in Knowles's “Roger Williams,” p. 176, 177. It is found in Hutchinson's History, I. 421.
- (8) “Throgmorton,” as printed by Knowles, p. 177.



his wife, Thomas Olney, and his wife, Stukeley Westcot,<sup>1</sup> and his wife, Mary Holliman, widow Reeves:—These wholly refused to hear the church, denying it, and all the churches in the Bay, to be true churches, and except two,<sup>2</sup> *are all re-baptized*.—Yours in the Lord JESUS,

HUGH PETERS.<sup>3</sup>

There seems to have been but one society or meeting of the Baptists, formed in the English nation, before this at Providence, and that was in London, under the pastoral care of Mr. John Spilsbury, on the 12th of September, 1633. The second in England was in 1639, gathered by Mr. Greene, and others. This first church of Baptists, at Providence,<sup>4</sup> hath from its beginning kept itself in repute, and maintained its discipline, so as to avoid scandal, or schism, to this day; hath always been, and still is a numerous congregation, and in which I have with pleasure observed, very lately, sundry descendants from each of the above-named founders, except Holliman.

The records concerning lands, first begin to appear about the year 1643, in the Providence books.<sup>5</sup> - - - Whether their first books of records were lost in the Indian war,<sup>6</sup> or none were made before this time, I have been able to gain no information. From this time forward, returns of surveys, and deeds of land were constantly found entered on the records. The deeds of that age differ so widely from the formal tautology of our pres-

(1) "Westcott."

(2) "(except two)."

(3) The signature in the original manuscript is "Hu. Peter."

(4) See (1) "the History of the first Baptist Church in Providence, 1639-1877," by Rev. Dr. Caldwell and Professor William Gammell; (2) "An historical discourse delivered at the celebration of the second centennial anniversary of the First Baptist Church, in Providence, Nov. 7, 1839," by Rev. William Hague, pastor of the church.

Also, (3) the "Address delivered before the Charitable Baptist Society on the one hundredth anniversary of the opening of the First Baptist Church, Providence, R. I., for public worship, May 28, 1875," by Samuel Greene Arnold, president of the society.

(5) See Staples's "Annals of Providence," p. 562-93.

(6) See the late Zachariah Allen's "Address on the two hundredth anniversary of the burning of Providence." In 1678, after the close of the war, those which were preserved were handed over to Daniel Abbott, the town clerk. See the inventory of the papers, printed in Appendix III.

ent deeds, that one of them, as a specimen of the simplicity of our ancestors, may not be disagreeable to the reader.

"THE 27th of the 11th month, 1644, William Field sold unto William Wickenden, all the share of land called six acres, lying upon the hill, called Foxe's Hill; bounding on the east and southeast with the land of Francis Wickes, and on the north and northeast with the highway, on the west and northwest with Mile-end Cove, and on the south with the sea."

All the deeds of land in Providence, down to the year 1660, will be found nearly in the same form; but these deeds were made, or, at least, solemnly acknowledged by the grantor, in an open town-meeting; and if the town approved of the sale, they, by a vote, ordered the deed to be immediately recorded; and this made the conveyance valid: But if the town disapproved of the bargain, the whole was void.—Whether any later invented method of conveying lands, hath been better adapted to prevent overreaching and fraud, is left to every honest man to determine. Indeed, in these days, they took so much care one of another, that a man was not permitted to sell his own lands, without leave of the town; for in 1652, I find, one Richard Pray petitioned the town that he might be permitted to sell some land of his own; and his request was granted.

The<sup>1</sup> first settlement in the Narraganset country was began in the year 1643, by Mr. Richard Smith, who set up a trading house in what is now called North Kingstown, at the place where the mansion house of the Updike family now stands: And Mr. Williams, and one Mr. Wilcox, soon after, set up another in the same part of the country; and some few plantations thereabouts were purchased of the Indians, and settled about the same time, or not long after.

The same year affords an instance of a very arbitrary exertion of power, by the Massachusetts colony, against the inhabitants of the town of Warwick, in this colony. Mr. Samuel Gorton, born in London,<sup>2</sup> of a good family, was a man of good

(1)From this point through the next twelve lines, the only copy of the *Providence Gazette* accessible, is torn, and a later reprint is followed.

(2)"He was born," says Brayton, "in the parish of Gorton," in Lancashire. ("Defence of Samuel Gorton," p. 5).



learning, though not bred at any university, came from England to Boston,<sup>1</sup> in the year 1636; but his religious opinions not agreeing with the standard established there, he removed first to Plymouth, then to Rhode-Island, afterwards to Providence, and at last, he, and his partners, before-named,<sup>2</sup> sat down at Warwick, and purchased the lands there.<sup>3</sup> The Massachusetts government did not think fit to let them rest in quiet.—To give their proceedings some colour, they induced Pomham, the petty sachem, who dwelt on the lands about Warwick, to come to Boston, and to put himself and his lands under their protection, although they knew very well he had before sold all his right to those lands, to the Warwick purchasers, and that the lands lay more than twenty miles without their jurisdiction. - - - Pomham's submission was made the 22d of the 4th month, 1643. Upon this Myantonomo, the great sachem of the Narragansetts, who was principal in selling the Warwick lands, was sent for to Boston, to shew what right he had to his kingdom, before the General Court of Massachusetts:<sup>4</sup>—He appeared, acknowledged his sale to the Warwick people, and averred his right to make it. The General Court were pleased to say, he had not made out his right to the Indian country, to their satisfaction. Having taken these previous steps, on the 12th of September, a summons was sent to the Warwick men, to appear before the General Court at Boston, to answer the complaint of Pomham and other Indians. To this the Warwick men answered, that they were not within the jurisdiction of the Massachusetts colony, and therefore refused to obey the summons.—This answer was called a high contempt.—There-

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(1) "He landed at Boston in March, 1636-7," (Brayton, p. 9).

(2) See page 36.

(3) Gorton's purchase was made near the end of 1641. The "Narragansett patent" was issued Dec. 10, 1643. The "patent of Providence Plantations," March 14, 1643-4. Gorton's purchase fell within both of the latter, and this was made the occasion of interference by the Massachusetts government.

(4) "The session continued three weeks," in the spring of 1641-2. (Winthrop's Journal, II. 66)

upon, on the 19th of the same month, forty armed men were sent under Captain George Cook, who, after a short siege, took Mr. Gorton, and eleven other principal inhabitants of the town of Warwick, and all their cattle, being eighty head, and such household goods as they could transport (destroying all the remainder) and carried them away to Boston, leaving their stripped and miserable families to the mercy of the more humane savages.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Gorton and his fellows, were confined in prison until the General Court sat at Boston, before whom they were brought for trial. But as they were now in safe custody, nothing is heard further of the complaint of Pomham, and the Indians:—Quite other matters are now laid to their charge, and after various altercations, the accusation against them was formed in these words,—“Upon much examination, and serious consideration of your writings, with your answers about them, we do charge you to be a blasphemous enemy of the true religion of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, and his holy ordinances; and also of all civil authority amongst the people of GOD, and particularly in this jurisdiction.” Upon this ridiculous and general charge, in which there is not a single fact alledged, to which any answer could possibly<sup>2</sup> be given, these twelve persons were tried for their lives.—Gorton’s writings were produced as evidence against them.—These he explained in such a manner, that Governour Winthrop, in open court, declared he could agree with them: But all were not to be satisfied so easily; and when the hearing of the cause was concluded, whether they should suffer death, or not, was the question put, and passed in the negative by a majority of two voices only. Although Mr. Gorton and his companions escaped with their lives, they did not escape a severe and very cruel sentence; they were doomed, each to a different town in the neighbourhood of Boston, (Gorton’s lot was Charlestown) there to remain during the pleasure of the court; each was to wear a great iron

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(1)Gorton’s “Simplicities defence,” (R. I. Hist. Soc. Collections, II. 116.)

(2)As above, the *Gazette* is here torn, for about twenty lines.

chain bolted fast to his leg, and in this condition to get his living by his labour, or starve; for the people were strictly forbid to give them any kind of relief: They were not to speak to any person, on any account whatever, except an officer in either church or state, on pain of death; and were not to say anything to them about religion, or to complain of hard usage from the government, on pain of the same penalty. In this condition they were kept one whole cold winter, and then the court banished them out of their jurisdiction, not to return into it again, on pain of death.---That is, they were permitted to go home to Warwick, from whence they had been brought by violence, but none of their cattle, or other goods, were ever restored to them.<sup>1</sup>

Soon after the Warwick men were at liberty, they procured the Narraganset sachems to make a solemn submission of themselves, their people, and country, to King Charles the First, begging his protection.--- The instrument of submission bears date the 19th August,<sup>2</sup> 1644.---For it seems these sachems, as well as the Warwick people, thought it necessary to apply to the British crown, for protection against the arbitrary proceedings of the Massachusetts government: But it was unhappy for Myantonomo, that the king of England was, at this time,<sup>3</sup> unable to afford him any protection, and that their unhappy fates too much resembled one another. The submission of the Indians, together with a complaint against the Massachusetts government, was carried to England by Mr. Gorton, Mr. John Greene, afterwards deputy-governor of this colony, and one of its most considerable men, and Mr. Randal Holdon. They

(1)Mr. Savage's comment is: "The story of the sufferers written more than twenty years after, in a short petition to the royal commissioners, may be seen in 2 Hist. Coll. [Mass.] VIII. 68-70, and Governour Hopkins still later by a hundred years, has embodied their wrongs in a very brief manner." "Both," he adds, "must be read by him who would know the whole truth." (Winthrop's Journal, II. 177, *Note*).

(2)The true date is *April* 19, 1644. See "Collections of the R. I. Historical Society," II. 160.

(3)The battle of Naseby, (June 14, 1645), was doubtless fought while Gorton, Greene, and Holden were in England.

obtained an order<sup>1</sup> from the Earl of Warwick, and the other commissioners for plantation affairs, directed to the Massachusetts colony, expostulating with them for want of charity, and for severity, and requiring them to give the Warwick people no further molestation, on account of their religion, or of their lands, and to permit them to pass peaceably through their government. This order was obeyed with great reluctancy by the Massachusetts authority, who also hereupon sent an agent<sup>2</sup> to England, to make answer to the complaints of Gorton and his friends; and this agent chiefly insisted, not that what they had acted was right, but that the doings of the Massachusetts colony were not subject to any re-examination<sup>3</sup> in England.

About this time a war broke out between the Narraganset Indians, and a nation or tribe of Indians called Mohegins, who lived near the sea coast, on the lands between Connecticut River and Quinnibaug River. In an engagement between them, it happened that Myantonomo, the young king of the Narragansets, was taken prisoner by Uncas, king of the Mohegins. The savage soul of Uncas doubted whether he ought to take away the life of a great king, who had fallen into his hands by misfortune; and to resolve this doubt, he applied to the Christian commissioners of the Four united colonies, who met at Hartford, in September, 1644:<sup>4</sup> They were less scrup[u]-lous, and ordered Uncas to carry Myantonomo out of their jurisdiction, and slay him; but kindly added, that he should not be tortured; they sent some persons to see execution done,

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(1) This is printed in the "Collections of the R. I. Historical Society," II. 195-97.

(2) This was Edward Winslow. See Winthrop's Journal II. 359-67.

(3) The ground taken by the Massachusetts Bay Colony, during this century, of which the above is a representative instance, has great interest from a constitutional point of view, and is very carefully traced by Mr. Charles Deane, in his admirable chapter on "The struggle to maintain the charter," in the "Memorial history of Boston," I. 329-82.

(4) The place of this meeting is wrong. This session of the commissioners was held at Boston, 1643. See Savage's note in Winthrop's Journal II. 161. The unfortunate Miantonomo, however, met his death somewhere in Connecticut, though the precise spot is not identified.

who had the satisfaction to see the captive king murdered in cold blood. This was the end of Myantonomo, the most potent Indian prince the people of New-England had ever any concern with; and this was the reward he received for assisting them seven years before, in their war<sup>1</sup> with the Pequots. Surely a Rhode Island man may be permitted to mourn his unhappy fate, and drop a tear on the ashes of Myantonomo, who, with his uncle Conanicus, were the best friends and greatest benefactors the colony ever had: They kindly received, fed, and protected the first settlers of it, when they were in distress, and were strangers and exiles, and all mankind else were their enemies; and by this kindness to them, drew upon themselves the resentment of the neighbouring colonies, and hastened the untimely end of the young king.

The Narragansets were greatly and justly enraged at the death of their sachem, more especially as they affirmed they had paid Uncas a ransom for him before he was slain, and therefore now resolved to take vengeance of the Mohegins. This the united Colonies were determined to prevent; and first sent messengers, to ex[h]ort them to make peace with the Mohegins, and offered to become mediators between them:—The Narragansets rejected this offer, and resolutely answered, they would continue the war until they had Uncas's head. Upon this the united Colonies raised an army of three hundred men, part of which having marched, and being ready to enter their country, the Narragansets not thinking themselves able to support a war against both the English and Mohegins together, were forced to submit to the hard terms imposed on them by the commissioners; and which were,—That they should make peace with Uncas, and restore all they had taken from him;—that they should not hereafter make war with any people, without leave first obtained;—that they should pay to the united Colonies two thousand fathom of wampum-peag, for the expences they had been at; and give hostages for the performance of these arti-

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(1) As before, the *Gazette* is torn for about fifteen lines.



cles.<sup>1</sup> These terms were submitted to by the Narraganset Indians on the 30th of August, 1645. How far the united Colonies were justifiable in the whole of this their conduct, toward a free and independant prince and people, who lived quite without the jurisdiction of any of their governments, and who had never been enemies, but always friends and allies to them, must be left to civilians to determine. Be that as it will, it is certain, these things greatly alienated the minds of the Indians from the English, and filled them with prejudices that could never afterwards be removed. And this will, in some measure, account for their obstinate refusal to receive or hear any of the ministers and missionaries that came from these colonies, as we are told by historians they constantly did; for these Indians seem to have thought no good could possibly be intended for them, by the people from whom, as they imagined, they had received so great injuries.<sup>2</sup> That this was the cause, and not any aversion to the Christian religion, as has been commonly represented, is evident from their willingness to hear Mr. Williams, who for many years, went to Narraganset, once a month, to preach<sup>3</sup> Christianity to them.<sup>4</sup>

(1) See Hazard's "Historical collections," II. 40-44.

(2) Compare Ellis's "The red man and the white man," p. 330-31.

(3) See Knowles's "Roger Williams," p. 327.

(4) "To be continued," is the entry which follows this instalment of the history, in the *Providence Gazette* of March 30, 1765. No farther continuation of it appears, however, and the probability is that no more was ever furnished to the printer.

Being thus interrupted in the completion of the work, Governor Hopkins, many years later, placed his materials in the hands of Theodore Foster, to be used for a similar purpose by him.

The only other reprint of the above is that of the Massachusetts Historical Society in 1832, without notes. ("Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society," 2d series, IX. 166-203). That Society's courteous approval of the present reprint, as proposed, should here be acknowledged.





# MATERIALS FOR A HISTORY OF RHODE ISLAND.<sup>1</sup>

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COLLECTED BY THEODORE FOSTER.

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It<sup>2</sup> was a principal object of the founders of the state, and much on their hearts, as expressed in their charter,<sup>3</sup> granted by King Charles II., so long ago as July 8, 1663, "to hold forth a livelie experiment, that a most flourishing civill state may stand and best bee maintained, (and that among our English subjects),<sup>4</sup> with a full libertie in religious concernements."<sup>5</sup>

This was a system of [*illegible*] then new and untried in the world,<sup>6</sup> but was adopted twenty years<sup>7</sup> afterwards by the famous Penn, in his constitution of Pennsylvania;<sup>8</sup> and is now in effect all over our great and growing empire,<sup>9</sup> by the national constitution, which provides that "No religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust

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(1) From the Foster Papers, IX. 1-9. This portion was probably written in this form so early as 1820. It does not appear to have been revised, and was left thus at Mr. Foster's death in 1828.

(2) A few sentences precede this which are not essential to the narrative. Stars \* \* \* will in general be employed to indicate omissions of this kind. Brackets [ ] will be used to enclose the passages cited from Bentley, Winthrop, Callender, etc.

(3) Printed in the "Records of the colony of Rhode Island," II. 1-21.

(4) The parentheses are not in the original.

(5) R. I. Col. Records, II. 4-5. The earlier use of this language has been traced to John Clarke. (R. I. Col. Records, I. 488.) See also p. 54 of this volume.

(6) See appendix II.

(7) "Frame of government," of Pennsylvania, May 5, 1682, Laws, Section 35.

(8) Printed in the "Federal and state constitutions," II. 1526.

(9) This introductory fragment was perhaps written out as late as 1820.

under the United States."<sup>1</sup> As this state was first settled by emigrants principally from Massachusetts, and [as] the histories<sup>2</sup> of the other New England states detail the most important events preliminary to their settlement, I therefore pass them by, and begin with those which were the immediate cause of the settlement of this state. Most of the first settlers of Massachusetts were those called Puritans,<sup>3</sup> or such as there sought a purer church [*illegible*] and a further reform from popery than were provided for by the parliamentary establishment in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. They ["generally had lived in the communion of the Church of England"].<sup>4</sup> \* \* \* A number of this description, influenced by the success of the colony of Plymouth, but a little more rigid in their ideas of church government than the people of Plymouth, obtained an ample charter from King Charles I., dated March 4, 1628-9,<sup>5</sup> for establishing a colony in Massachusetts, and on the 29th of August, at Cambridge in England an agreement<sup>6</sup> was signed,<sup>7</sup> \* \* \*, "to

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(1) Constitution of the United States, Article 6, section 3.

(2) One of the earliest of these histories, (though not put in print until 1815, as volumes 4 and 5 of the 2d series of the Massachusetts Historical Society Collections), was Rev. William Hubbard's "General history of New England," written between 1680 and 1704. It is perhaps entirely safe to speak of it as characterized in many particulars by violent prejudices as well as looseness of statement, (See note by Savage, in Winthrop's Journal, I. 297); and his reference to Rhode Island is among the instances. Of that colony he writes: "Bona terra. Mala gens." ("General history," II. 350). It is not a little curious, in view of this decided opinion of his, that Senator Foster should have been one of his descendants, (in the 5th generation). Mr. Hubbard was mercifully spared, no doubt, so unwelcome an intimation as this, or that descendants of his own would be born on Rhode Island soil.

(3) The original distinction between this settlement and that of the Plymouth pilgrims is considered by Mr. Brigham, in his lecture on "The colony of New Plymouth, and its relations to Massachusetts." (Lowell Institute lectures," p. 179-80).

(4) CALLENDER, p. 68.

(5) Printed in Mass. Col. Records, I. 1-20.

(6) Printed in Young's "Chronicles of Massachusetts Bay," p. 281-82.

(7) Here follow in the manuscript the names of the signers. Among them was William Pynchon, an ancestor of Senator Foster, himself. Mr. Pynchon's

embark for the said plantation by the first of March next,"—"to inhabit and continue in New-England: Provided always, that before the last of September next, the whole government, together with the patent for the said Plantation, be first, by an order of Court, legally transferred,<sup>1</sup> and established to remain with us and others which shall inhabit upon the said plantation." And on the 20th of October, 1629, a new choice was made of governor, &c., consisting of such persons as had determined to go out with the patent;—John Winthrop was then elected governor.<sup>2</sup> \* \* \* [They] made effectual settlement at Charlestown, Watertown, Dorchester, Boston, &c., which increased and prospered, notwithstanding the difficulties and hardships they had to encounter. \* \* \* Mr. Callender<sup>3</sup> \* \* \* observes that "perhaps they were afraid of provoking the higher powers at home if they countenanced other sects, and perhaps those who differed from them took the more freedom in venting and pressing their peculiar opinions, from the safety and protection they expected, under a charter that had granted liberty of conscience."<sup>4</sup> In confirmation of this, it may be added that, in a letter<sup>5</sup> from the governor and company after they had embarked for New England, dated "From Yarmouth, aboard

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manuscript "catechism," a most curious relic, is preserved in the Foster Papers, XII. 1. A record of the Pynchon family is also in the Foster Papers.

(1) This significant "transfer" is examined by Charles Deane, in his chapter on "The charter," in the "Memorial history of Boston," I. 329–30.

(2) Here follow in manuscript the names of the "assistants elected."

(3) In his "Century sermon," reprinted as volume 4 of the "Collections of the Rhode Island Historical Society."

(4) Callender, p. 69–70. Mr. Callender's conjecture may be correct. *Per contra*, the Quakers would appear to have taken a different view of the matter. A letter dated Oct. 13, 1657, sent by the president and assistants of the Rhode Island colony, to the commissioners of the United Colonies, humorously remarks concerning the Quakers, that "they begin to loath this place, for that they are not opposed by the civill authority." (R. I. Col. Records, I. 377). Compare Winthrop's Journal, I. 340. The "witty man" here mentioned by Savage would appear to be President Benédict Arnold, judging from his language in 1657.

(5) Printed in Young's "Chronicles of Massachusetts Bay," p. 295–98.

the Arbella,<sup>1</sup> April 7, 1630," and addressed "To the rest of their brethren, in and of the Church of England," they say:

"We desire you would be pleased to take notice of the principals and body of our Company, as those who esteem it our honor to call the Church of England, from whence we rise, our dear mother; and cannot part from our native country where she specially resideth, without much sadness of heart and many tears in our eyes, ever acknowledging that such hope and part as we have obtained in the common salvation, we have received in her bosom and sucked in from her breasts. We leave it not therefore as loathing that milk wherewith we were nourished there; but, blessing God for the parentage and education, as members of the same body, shall always rejoice in her good, and unfeignedly grieve for any sorrows that shall ever betide her, and while we have breath, sincerely desire and endeavour the continuance and abundance of her welfare, with the enlargement of her bounds in the kingdom of Christ Jesus."<sup>2</sup>

Other parts of this remarkable letter<sup>3</sup> were intended to remove suspicions or misconstruction and to ask the prayers of their brethren of the Church of England.<sup>4</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

[Roger Williams] was born in Wales, A. D. 1599.<sup>5</sup>

(1) "Arabella" in the manuscript. The name is thus misspelled by Hutchinson, Neal, Holmes, and others. The vessel was named for Lady Arbella Johnson. See Savage's note, in Winthrop's Journal, I. 2.

(2) Compare with this the language of Rev. Francis Higginson, on leaving England, in 1628, (quoted in Mather's "Magnalia," book III, part II, chap. 1).

(3) It was signed by Winthrop, Coddington, and others.

(4) Senator Foster, in a passage omitted above, draws from this letter the conclusion,—unwarranted, as it is now seen to be,—that the "first settlers of Massachusetts contemplated a uniformity in religion when they left England, which ended in the Congregationalism of the Cambridge Platform." The truth is, that the colonists were unaware of the influences and tendencies at work in their own minds, nor did they know how rapidly, when once the Atlantic rolled between them and the mother church, their latent separatism would manifest itself. John and Samuel Browne, in this very year, were the unwitting means of committing the puritan leaders to their final policy. (See Morton's "New England's memorial," ed., 1826, p. 148).

(5) 1599 is not certainly known to be the date. See the comparison of authorities, in Dexter's "As to Roger Williams," p. 3.

\* \* \* He had a good education,<sup>1</sup> and acquired some knowledge of the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages.<sup>2</sup> \* \* \* He was sometime a pupil of the famous English lawyer, [and] Lord Chief Justice, Sir Edward Coke.<sup>3</sup> \* \* \* Embittered against the Church of England and her bishops, on account of their persecution of the puritans, whose religious sentiments<sup>4</sup> he had imbibed and preached as a minister,<sup>5</sup> he determined to come to New England, to settle here in that character. He embarked with his wife, accompanied by Messrs Throg-

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(1) "He was elected," says Professor Diman, "a scholar of the Charter-house, June 25, 1621, and was matriculated a pensioner of Pembroke College, Cambridge, July 7, 1625. He took the degree of Bachelor of Arts, January, 1627. His signature is still preserved in the subscription book of the University." (Diman's "Orations and essays," p. 136).

(2) Mr. Williams, in a letter to John Winthrop, the younger, in 1654, speaks of his studies in "the Hebrew, the Greek, Latin, French, and Dutch. The Secretary of the Council, (Mr. Milton), for my Dutch I read him, read me many more languages." (Narragansett Club Pub., VI. 261-62). See page 51.

(3) Compare the Sadleir papers, printed in Narragansett Club Pub., VI. 252-53. There is in the library of the Rhode Island Historical Society, a copy of Coke's "Institutes of the laws of England," which shows the signatures of many successive owners. The earliest of these is "Richard Smith, Narragansett," at whose house Williams wrote many of his letters. It is not known that Smith had pursued any legal studies, and it is by no means impossible that the book was a gift to him from Williams himself.

(4) Williams's own "religious sentiments" were characterized by a most unusual individuality. "Admitted to orders, in the Church of England," (see Elton's "Roger Williams," p. 12), he "separated" successively, from that body; from the non-conformist organizations which he found in the Massachusetts Bay Colony: from his own church at Salem; from the church at Providence, organized on Baptist principles, with which he was apparently connected for a few months only; and finally from the small body of "Seekers," who for a time worshipped with him thereafter.

(5) Although he is stated to have been "admitted to orders, in the Church of England," it is not known with certainty over what parish he was placed. A passage in his "Bloody tenent yet more bloody," gives the suggestion that it was in Lincolnshire, and possibly Sempringham. (See Narragansett Club Pub., IV. 65). A letter to the editor, however, from the Rev. T. C. L. Layton, the present vicar of Sempringham, states that Williams's name nowhere occurs on the records of the parish.



morton,<sup>1</sup> Ong,<sup>2</sup> Perkins,<sup>3</sup> &c., with their wives and families, to the number of 20 passengers, in the ship *Lyon*, Capt. Wm. Peirce, and sailed from Bristol in England, Dec. 1, 1630, and after a tempestuous passage arrived at Boston, Feby. 5, 1631-2.

\* \* \* \* \*

Mr. Williams had become the assistant minister of the church of Salem, on the 12th day of April, 1631;<sup>5</sup> sixty-six days after his arrival in the country. But [he] was displeased with the language of affection to the Church of England which he heard in America, and expressed himself with warmth on the occasion. His ideas of religious liberty, which he was fond of promoting, suited ill with those then prevalent in the country, and soon excited prejudice against him in Boston and the other towns, except Salem.<sup>6</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

He was firmly tenacious of his opinions, which he thought correct, and nothing would compel him to renounce or conceal them. This excited an opposition against him that "before the close of summer," [says Bentley], obliged him "to retire to Plymouth."<sup>7</sup> [Senator Foster here quotes from Bentley]—

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(1) One of those who followed Roger Williams to Providence. See p. 19.

(2) "Augre" in the 1st edition of Savage's *Winthrop*, and in Senator Foster's manuscript. Compare 3d edition of Savage's *Winthrop*, I. 51.

(3) Savage's doubt as to his identity, (*Savage's Winthrop*, 1st ed., I. 40), has since been solved. See Essex Institute "Historical collections," XIX. 217-23.

(4) The next two paragraphs were misplaced, in the manuscript.

(5) Senator Foster's statement is here based on Dr. Bentley's, (*Mass. Hist. Soc. Collections*, 1st series, VI. 246). That this was the date of a "call," and not of his settlement, appears from *Winthrop's Journal*, I. 63, and also that some opposition intervened. (*Winthrop's Journal*, I. 63). Compare also Felt's "*Annals of Salem*," II. 569; and Dexter's "*As to Roger Williams*," p. 5, 36-37. See page 16, *ante*.

(6) Senator Foster here quotes from Dr. Bentley, as being the ruling considerations in Mr. Williams's voluntary retirement to Plymouth in 1631:—"the patent, the freeman's oath, the power of the magistrate in religion, and the laws for the worship of God." (*Mass. Hist. Soc. Collections*, 1st series, VI. 246). This is certainly worth remembering in considering his later retirement to Narragansett Bay in 1636. See also Appendix I.

(7) Williams undoubtedly left Salem for Plymouth sometime between August 1, and Sept. 1, 1631. Bentley says: "before the close of the summer." (p. 246). Compare also Dr. T. M. Harris's note, (*Mass. Hist. Soc.*

[“He there occasionally assisted Mr. Ralph Smith, their pastor, and inspired the same conviction of his piety.<sup>1</sup> But he still fixed his eyes upon Salem, where he had received proofs of undissembled friendship. On the next year he had an opportunity in” October<sup>2</sup> “of joining in the communion of the church at Plymouth, with Governor Winthrop, who had uniformly opposed him,<sup>3</sup> and before the close of 1632, he was again in Salem. His daughter [Mary], was born to him by his wife in

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Coll., 2d series, V. 203, *note* 2.) He was at Plymouth, Oct. 25, 1632. (Winthrop's Journal, I. 109). Bentley says: “Before the close of 1632 he was again in Salem.” (p. 247). Backus cites the Records of the town of Providence, to prove that he was still in Plymouth in August, 1633, and that his daughter was born there. (“History,” I. 57, 516.) Compare also Knowles's “Roger Williams,” p. 54. Cotton, who arrived at Boston, Sept. 3, 1633, says that Mr. Williams was “in the Bay, [Salem], not long before my coming.” (“Reply to Mr. Williams his examination,” in Narragansett Club. Pub. II. 13). Morton, (“New England's memorial,” ed. 1826, p. 150-51) says that Williams lived at Plymouth “about three years.” This would postpone his return to Salem to about August, 1634. Morton is apparently followed by Hubbard, Baylies, Hutchinson, and others. But from the statements made by those who have most recently investigated the matter, (Professor Diman, Dr. Dexter, and Dr. Guild), it would appear that he was living at Plymouth until after August, 1633, but returned to Salem before the winter of that year. See p. 16, *ante*.

- (1) Governor Bradford's language is worth quoting. He says that Mr. Williams “exercised his gifts amongst them, and after some time was admitted a member of ye church; and his teaching well approved, for ye benefite wherof I still blesse God, and am thankfull to him, even for his sharpest admonitions & reproofs, so farr as they agreed with truth.” (Bradford's “Plymouth plantation,” p. 310).
- (2) Bentley is wrong in saying “in August.” Mr. Foster has written “October,” which is correct. He doubtless took this from Winthrop, (I. 108-10).
- (3) This language (which it will be observed, is Bentley's), would appear to be somewhat gratuitous. Governor Winthrop's relations to Mr. Williams throughout show him to be a most consistent and determined opponent so far as his projects concerned the established order of the colony; and an equally consistent and devoted friend to him personally. “Through life,” says Professor Diman, “his most trusted counselor was the wise, the discriminating, the magnanimous Winthrop, who, he declares, ‘tenderly loved him to his last breath.’” (“Orations and essays,” p. 132). There is no evidence to show that Governor Winthrop's attitude at this particular time was opposed to that which was characteristic of him.

August, 1633.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Skelton's sickness gave him an opportunity to renew his public labours in the pulpit, for the pastoral relation had not been dissolved and before 1633 was finished, his former difficulties returned."<sup>2</sup>

[Gov. Endicott belonged to this church, and had great influence over Mr. Skelton. They<sup>3</sup> had, before Mr. Williams's arrival "embraced the doctrine of veils for the women in the church; and if he [Gov. Endicott] worshipped in the beauty of holiness he was determined that human beauty should form no part of his pleasure." \* \* \* \* \*

Mr. Williams, [says Bentley],<sup>4</sup> ["disapproved the connexion of the churches in Old and New England; yet he was prudent enough not to offer violence to the established forms. But all his hearers could not make the same distinctions. Endicott ventured to apply his doctrine, and cut the cross from the military standard. Endicott did it without advice; but the resentment of the magistrate spent itself upon Williams, who, though the innocent, was the real cause of it."] For he was considered as influencing Mr. Endicott, one of the magistrates, and a member of his church, to cut the cross out of the King's colors, as being a relique of antichristian superstition; and this was said to be a sufficient cause for the court to interpose. At the court of assistants in November, 1634,<sup>5</sup> Richard Brown, of Watertown, for himself and others, complained<sup>6</sup> that the ensign of Salem was defaced by having one part of the red cross taken out. The ensign-bearer, Richard Davenport, was attached to answer at the next court and before the business was

(1) "A child was born to him at Salem in August, 1633," says Bentley, p. 247, but he cites no records to substantiate the statement, as to the place of birth.

(2) In the manuscript the passages ending here were in an incorrect chronological order.

(3) BENTLEY, p. 245.

(4) Bentley, p. 246.

(5) Nov. 5, 1634. See Winthrop, I. 174-75. See also p. 179, where Winthrop states a doubt in his mind as to "the lawful use of the cross in an ensign."

(6) This account is based on Winthrop's Journal, I. 174-75.

passed,<sup>1</sup> a great [illegible] was made of it, by complicating Mr. Endicott and others, probably with an intention that it should operate against Mr. Williams ;—as if it would be taken as an act of rebellion against the king's authority.<sup>2</sup> The people of every town [illegible] one of their body, and the magistrates chose four who were appointed a committee to consider of the offence, and the censure due against it. The<sup>3</sup> committee reported to the court that [“they found the offence of Mr. Endicott” to be great, viz. rash and without discretion, taking upon him more authority than he had, and in not asking advice of the court, &c. ; unwarrantable,<sup>4</sup> in that, he, judging the cross to be a sin, did content himself “to have it reformed” at Salem, not taking care that others might be brought out of it also ; laying a blemish also upon the rest of the magistrates, as if they would suffer idolatry, &c., and giving occasion to the state of England to think ill of [the colony] ;—for which they adjudged him worthy admonition, and to be disabled for one year from bearing any publick office, declining any heavier sentence, because they were persuaded he did it out of tenderness of conscience ; and not of any evil intent.”] Mr. Endicott was admonished and removed<sup>5</sup> from office accordingly.<sup>6</sup> \* \* \* Mr.

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(1) It was laid over from the sessions of Nov. 5, 1634, Nov. 27, 1634, and March 4, 1634-5, to that of May 6, 1635.

(2) A commission had been appointed by the king, with power to call in previous patents. [See Hubbard's "General History of New England," I. 226-33.] It is not remarkable that a matter like this should cause apprehension.

(3) WINTHROP'S JOURNAL, I. 189.

(4) This is the word as given in the 1790 edition of Winthrop, which was here followed. Mr. Savage, however, (2d ed. I. 158), changes it to "uncharitable."

(5) The annual election for governor and assistants occurred on the same day, (May 6, 1635) ; and Mr. Endicott, who had served as an assistant since 1630 was "left out." (Winthrop, I. 158). His name appears again in the list of assistants in 1637.

(6) This incident furnished Nathaniel Hawthorne with the material for his picturesquely told narrative of "The red cross," (in his "True stories from history and biography").

Williams \* \* \* was "never satisfied that the princes of Europe had right to take possession of the American continent, and to grant its territories, piece by piece, to their subjects, without making compensation for it to the native owners." He had formerly, at the request of some of his friends, written some treatises<sup>1</sup> on this subject, which were sent to the governor and council of Plymouth at their requests:—wherein<sup>2</sup> [he disputed "their right to the land they possessed here" and concluded, "that claiming by the king's grant" "they could have no title," nor otherwise, except they compounded with the natives]."<sup>3</sup> And on their being sent for from Plymouth, he also sent a copy to the governor and assistants of Massachusetts, who met at Boston, Dec. 27, 1633, to take them into consideration. And ["taking<sup>4</sup> advice from some of the most judicious ministers, (who much condemned Mr. Williams's error and presumption), they gave order"] that he should be proceeded against therefor at the next court. Mr. Williams now wisely yielded to the circumstances of the times, and wrote to Gov. Winthrop, to Mr. Endicott, and the rest of the council, that the books which had given offence had been formerly written for the private gratification of some of his friends;—without further purpose, if the Governor of Plymouth had not required a copy of him; and declared ["that he would burn them<sup>5</sup> with his own hands, if such an act would quiet the public fears]."<sup>5</sup> This concession was con-

(1) These "treatises" are also mentioned by William Coddington, (in the Appendix to Fox and Burnyeat's "New-England's firebrand quenched," p. 246: also in a letter from Winthrop to Endicott, dated Jan. 3, 1633-4. ("Massachusetts Historical Society Proceedings," 1871-73, p. 343).

(2) These manuscripts probably never appeared in print. See WINTHROP, I. 145.

(3) It would have been strange indeed if these "treatises" of Mr. Williams had not touched the Massachusetts colonists in a sensitive spot. The history of Rhode Island from 1663 to 1790, however furnishes an even more striking instance of sensitiveness as regards charter rights.

(4) WINTHROP, I. 145.

(5) BENTLEY, p. 247. One of his volumes actually was burned in England in or about 1644. This was his "Bloudy tenent of persecution." See his statement in 1671. (Narragansett Club Pub., VI. 353).



sidered sufficient, and at the next court<sup>1</sup> he privately gave such satisfaction that nothing further was done in the business. Mr. Williams then had rest till after the death of Mr. Skelton, which happened August 2d, 1634. \* \* \* \*

Mr. Skelton [says Bentley]<sup>2</sup> had been "a rigid disciplinarian, but inclined to the utmost equality of privileges in church and state."<sup>3</sup> This had produced a personal friendship between [them] in Mr. Skelton's lifetime, and they unitedly ["sought opportunities to retaliate upon the churches, which so freely remonstrated against their errors. They admitted the justice of some accusations, that they might require the same confessions. The church under their care justified them."] \* \* \* Every opportunity was sought to remove Mr. Williams. In Feby. 1635, he was called before the governor and assistants, to answer because ["he had taught publicly that a magistrate ought not to tender an oath to an unregenerate man,<sup>4</sup> for that we thereby have communion with a wicked man, in the worship

(1) Jan. 24, 1633-4. (Winthrop, I. 147).

(2) See BENTLEY, p. 247.

(3) Bentley cites still another occasion of disagreement, omitted here. He says: "Mr. Skelton and Williams did not view with indifference the frequent meetings of the ministers." \* \* \* "Skelton thought he foresaw the power of Presbyteries, and he had spirit to express a fear of it, though exercised under another name." (Bentley, p. 248). Another instance of the sensitiveness to the dictation of synods, manifested by the Salem church later on in its history, is cited by Upham, ("Second century lecture," p. 47-49). He remarks: "The church in Salem dreaded the consequences of these assemblies in the beginning, and has more than once refused to submit to their enactments". It would seem that when in 1710 another Essex county minister, the Rev. John Wise, so forcibly contended for the theory of democracy in the Christian church, in a treatise which has been pronounced "a piece of triumphant logic, brightened by wit, and ennobled by imagination; a master-specimen of the art of public controversy," (Tyler's "History of American literature," II. 110), he would have been justified in looking back to Roger Williams and Samuel Skelton for some part of his inspiration.

(4) Mr. Williams himself never took the freeman's oath. For its form, see the "Records of the governor and company of Massachusetts Bay," I. 115, 117. There was another Roger Williams who took the oath, May 18, 1631. Mass. Col. Records, I. 366. See note in Dexter's "As to Roger Williams," p. 28-29).



of God, and cause him to take the name of God in vain.”] Winthrop says: “He was heard before all the ministers, and very clearly confuted.”<sup>1</sup>

[And<sup>2</sup> before the meeting of the General Assembly [sic]<sup>3</sup> in May,<sup>4</sup> it happened that he was sick “and unable to perform the duties of his pulpit,” when his opinions respecting communion “were again demanded,<sup>5</sup> and his answers were not employed for the most generous purposes. Every hateful tale was reported. He had asked, whether it was not absurd to give an oath to a man whom the church, by exclusion, had declared to be a man of no religion; and this was to condemn the magistrates.”]

On the 8th of May,<sup>6</sup> 1635, he was summoned and appeared before the General Court; When, [says Winthrop<sup>7</sup>], he was charged with holding [“divers dangerous opinions, viz.—(1) That the magistrate ought not to punish the breach of the first table, otherwise than in such cases as did disturb the public peace.<sup>8</sup> (2) That he ought not to tender an oath to an unregenerate man. (3) That a man ought not to pray with such, though wife, child, &c.<sup>9</sup> (4) That a man ought not to give thanks after the sacrament nor after meat, &c.”] And the church of Salem was censured for that when the other churches were about to write to that church to admonish him of these errors, yet that church had called him to the office of teacher.<sup>10</sup>

(1) Winthrop, I. 188. This was Apr. 30, 1635.

(2) The passage in these brackets is struck out, in the manuscript.

(3) “General Court” is of course meant.

(4) “May” should of course be July. (Winthrop, I. 193).

(5) BENTLEY, p. 248.

(6) The true date is July 8, 1635. (Winthrop, I. 193).

(7) WINTHROP, I. 193–94

(8) The “First table” comprises the first four commandments of the decalogue.

The limiting clause of Mr. Williams’s opinion on this point is of essential importance, and should not be overlooked.

(9) Some curious and probably unwarrantable inferences from this statement of Mr. Williams may be seen in Mather’s “Magnalia,” book 7, ch. 2, sect. 6.

(10) Winthrop’s language is: “The other churches were about (July 8, 1635), to write to the church of Salem, to admonish him of these errors; not-

“The said opinions were adjudged by all, magistrates and ministers, (who were desired to be present), to be erroneous and very dangerous, and the calling of him to office at that time was adjudged a great contempt of authority.”<sup>1</sup> But it was given to him and the church of Salem to consider of these things till the next General Court, and then either to give satisfaction to the court or else to expect the sentence. It was<sup>2</sup> [“declared by the ministers, (at the request of the court to give their advice) that he who should obstinately maintain such opinions, (whereby a church might run into heresy, apostacy, [sic] or tyranny, and yet the civil magistrate could not intermeddle), were to be removed,<sup>3</sup> and that the other churches ought to request the magistrates so to do.”] Mr. Williams, however, was of a make not to be intimidated. He acted from principle. “Every person in Salem, [says Bentley]<sup>4</sup> loved Mr. Williams.” He had there no personal enemies, under any pretence. All valued his friendship. Kind treatment could win him, but opposition could not conquer him. He was not afraid to stand alone for truth against the world; and he had always address enough with his firmness, never to be forsaken by the friends he had ever gained.”<sup>5</sup> It was therefore not to be expected that the threatening of the General Court would have the effect they wished. So far from it that when he was sick in the month of

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withstanding the church had since called him to [the] office of a teacher. (Winthrop, I. 194). This would seem to fix the date of this “calling” in the months of May, or June, 1635. See Note 7, p. 16, *ante*.

(1) WINTHROP, I. 194.

(2) Quoted from Winthrop, I. 194.

(3) “that he \* \* \* were to be removed.” The grammatical construction of this sentence, (Winthrop’s), might be clearer. It obviously means: “should be removed.”

(4) BENTLEY, p. 249–50.

(5) “It was his good fortune,” says Mr. Upham, “to find in John Endicott, and in many others of his congregation in Salem, kindred spirits, ready and willing to take the same noble and magnanimous stand. They adhered to him long and faithfully, and sheltered him from all assaults.” (“Second century lecture” at Salem, 1829, by Charles Wentworth Upham, p. 43).

June<sup>1</sup> following, and unable to perform the duties of his pulpit, he [“wrote to his church a protestation that he could not communicate with the churches in the bay, neither would he communicate with them, except they would refuse communication with the rest,”]—at which the whole church were much grieved.<sup>2</sup> This was an extraordinary stage. It marks a decision, though at the same time an eccentricity, of character. His being willing to break from his church can be accounted for only from his having had on his mind a full conviction that it was inevitable, and that he would be obliged to leave the colony of Massachusetts and to seek an asylum in Plymouth colony, or in the Narragansett country,<sup>3</sup> among the Indians whom he had [illegible] there in the preceding year. In November, 1635,<sup>4</sup> Mr. Williams was again,—for the third time—under censure before the General Court, and all the ministers of the colony who had been desired to attend. [“He was charged with the said two letters,—that to the churches,<sup>5</sup> complaining of the magistrates for injustice, extreme oppression, etc., and the other to his own church, to persuade them to renounce communion with all the churches in the Bay, as full of anti-christian pollution, &c. He justified both these letters, and maintained all his opinions”] “for which he had been called in question,” and being offered further conference or disputation and a month’s respite, he chose to dispute presently. So, Mr. Hooker was appointed to dispute with him,<sup>6</sup> but to no purpose. He was therefore sentenced the

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(1) Winthrop, I. 198. The entry, however, occurs under August 16, 1635, and not in June.

(2) Winthrop’s language in this case is: “But the whole church was grieved herewith.” (I. 198). Compare Dexter’s note, (“As to Roger Williams,” p. 43–45).

(3) Winthrop says that he and others “were intended to erect a plantation about the Narragansett Bay.” (I. 209.)

(4) The date should be October. For this discrepancy, see Note. It is to be noted that the account is still taken from Winthrop. (I. 204).

(5) This letter is mentioned by Winthrop, (I. 195). “Upon this the church of Salem write,” etc.

(6) This was Rev. Thomas Hooker, minister of Cambridge, founder of Hartford, Conn., in the same year.

next morning<sup>1</sup> to depart the jurisdiction in six weeks.<sup>2</sup> The sentence was read to him by Govr. Haynes. Mr. Winthrop writes: "all the ministers save one<sup>3</sup> approving the sentence," and that "he at his return home, refused communion with his own church, who openly disclaimed his errors, and wrote an humble submission to the magistrates, acknowledging their fault in joining with Mr. Williams in that letter to the churches against them, &c. Under these circumstances he retired to a separate worship.<sup>4</sup> \* \* \* "Measures," [says Bentley], "were taken to seize him privately and transport him" to England, "but he had friends to inform him, and he left the colony in Jannary, 1636."<sup>5</sup> To prevent [his] being taken, he was obliged to keep concealed, and suffered inexpressible hardships during that winter. \* \* \* It is not precisely known where or how Mr. Williams passed the first four months after his banishment. The best account we have of it is in his letter<sup>6</sup> to Major Mason, dated at Providence, Jan. 22, 1670, where it is transiently [sic] mentioned.

\* \* \* \* \*

"First. When I was unkindly and unchristianly, as I believe, driven from my house and land and wife and children, (in the midst of a New England winter now about thirty-five years past), at Salem, that ever honored governor, Mr. Winthrop,<sup>7</sup> privately

(1) Winthrop's language is: "So, the next morning the court sentenced him," etc. (I. 204). This would make the date Oct. 9, according to Dr. Dexter, ("As to Roger Williams," p. 58), or Oct. 8, according to Professor Diman, (Narragansett Club Pub., II. 239).

(2) The language of the sentence is: "shall depte out of this jurisdiccon within sixe weekes nowe nexte ensueing." (Mass Col. Rec., I. 161.)

(3) "Save one." It would be interesting to know who the "one" was. See Dr. Dexter's note, concerning the supposition that it was Mr. Cotton. ("As to Roger Williams," p. 59).

(4) "This," says Bentley, "was a separation, against the laws." (p. 249).

(5) See Winthrop, I. 209-10.

(6) Printed in Narragansett Club Pub., VI. 335-38.

(7) Mr. James Russell Lowell, commenting on the correspondence which passed between these friends, who yet differed irreconcilably in their doctrines, says: "There are two men, above all others, for whom our respect is heightened by these letters,—the elder John Winthrop and

wrote to me to steer my course to Narragansett-Bay, and Indians, for many high and heavenly and public ends, encouraging me, from the freeness of the place from any English claims or patents. I took his prudent motion as a hint and voice from God, and waving<sup>1</sup> all other thoughts and motions, I steered my course<sup>2</sup> from Salem, (though in winter snow which I feel yet), unto these parts, wherein I may say Peniel, that is, I have seen the face of God. Second, I first pitched and begun to build and plant at Seekonk,<sup>3</sup> now Rehoboth,<sup>4</sup> but I received a letter from my ancient friend, Mr. Winslow, then governor of Plymouth, professing his own and others' love and respect to me, yet lovingly advising me, since I was fallen into the edge of their bounds, and they were loath to displease the Bay, to remove but to the other side of the water, and then, he said, I had the country free before me, and might be as free as themselves, and we should be loving neighbors together. These were the joint understandings of these two eminently wise and Christian Governors and others in their day, together with their counsel and advice as to the freedom and vacancy of this place,<sup>5</sup> which, in this respect and many other Providences of the Most Holy and Only Wise, I called *Providence*. Third. Sometime after, the Plymouth great sachem, (Ousamaquin<sup>6</sup>), upon occasion, affirming that Providence was his land, and therefore Plymouth's land, and some resenting it, the then prudent and godly governor, Mr. Bradford,<sup>7</sup> and others of his godly council, answered, that if, after due examination, it should be found true

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Roger Williams." Williams' "affection" he adds, "for the two Winthrops is evidently of the warmest." ("Among my books," 1st series, p. 246.)

(1) I. e., waiving.

(2) He was joined by John Smith, who had been living at what is now Ponkapog, in Canton, (see letters of Job Smith), and this may perhaps indicate in part what was Williams's "course" from Salem to Seekonk.

(3) He bought from Ousamequin a title to the land on which he here built. (Knowles's "Roger Williams," p. 100). This location, according to Moses Brown, was above the present Central Bridge. R. I. Register, 1828.

(4) But since then East Providence, R. I.

(5) "The freedom and vacancy of this place." It is not necessary to question the sincerity of either the Massachusetts or Plymouth governor in this matter. No sooner, however, did it appear that a few straggling settlements around Narragansett Bay were crystallizing into a "body politic," than the agitation of the land claims began which more than half a century was required to settle. See page 17, *ante*.

(6) "Otherwise known as Massasoit."

(7) Winslow was governor of Plymouth colony in 1636; Bradford from March, 1637. Ousamequin's claim, therefore, was subsequent to the latter date.



what the barbarian said, yet having to my loss of a harvest<sup>1</sup> that year, been now, (though by their gentle advice), as good as banished from Plymouth as from the Massachusetts, and I had quietly and patiently departed from them, at their motion to the place where now I was, I should not be molested and tossed up and down again, while they had breath in their bodies; and surely, between those, my friends of the Bay and Plymouth, I was sorely tossed for one fourteen weeks in a bitter winter season, not knowing what bread or bed did mean:" \* \* \* "It pleased the Father of spirits to touch many hearts, dear to him, with some relentings; amongst which that great and pious soul Mr. Winslow, melted, and kindly visited me at Providence, and put a piece of gold<sup>2</sup> into the hands of my wife for our supply."

When Roger Williams first came to Providence in the year 1634,<sup>3</sup> he was accompanied only by a young domestic [*illegible*] of his family, named Thomas Angell.<sup>4</sup> They<sup>5</sup> embarked

(1) From this reference to "a harvest," Knowles draws the inference that he did not cross to the Providence side of the river "till the middle, perhaps, of June." (Knowles's "Roger Williams," p. 103). The first entry on the Providence records is dated June 16, 1636. (R. I. Col. Records, I. 12).

(2) Mr. Williams's honorable method of dealing with the Indians, in obtaining grants of land, was not an inexpensive one, as appears from the language of the deeds, (R. I. Col. Records, I. 19, 25); and undoubtedly diminished very sensibly his already slender resources.

(3) The date is wrong. It should be 1636.

(4) The ancestor of a numerous family. The location of his home lot is perpetuated by the name of Angell Street. A descendant in the fourth generation, (Nathan Angell), married a sister of Governor Hopkins.

(5) There is an obvious discrepancy between the account here given and nearly every other printed account of this episode, (See, however, Stone's "John Howland," p. 344), connected as it is with the salutation, "What Cheer." The other writers referred to, make this to have occurred on the occasion of the final removal from the Seekonk settlement to the location at Moshassuck, and represent that his five companions were with him. This account states that only one, (Thomas Angell), was with him, and that it was on the occasion of a reconnoitring voyage. Yet, although Governor Hopkins does not in his printed "Historical account" allude to these details, he was Mr. Foster's authority for this statement, as appears from the deposition of June 6, 1821, already alluded to, (preserved in the "Foster Papers," VI. 19). He says: "In one of those interviews he told me that Thomas Angell, one of the first settlers and purchasers of Providence, when a young lad belonging to and living in the family of Roger Williams, the founder and afterwards the president of the state for some years, came with him, the said Williams, in a canoe down Sec-



in a canoe from the Secconk side of the river, and going towards the southern extremity of the land, between Secconk and Moshawsuck Rivers, when they came opposite a certain cove, some distance above what is now called India Point, they were in a friendly manner saluted by some of the Indians, by the words "What Cheer." Which from that circumstance they named What Cheer Cove,—so called on the records of this town,—by which name it has ever since been known.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Williams went round Fox-point, and up Moshawsuck River, till they came opposite an excellent and beautiful spring, rising out of the ground, at the bottom of the hill, and running into the river, a little southwest of where the Episcopal Church,<sup>2</sup> now stands. Gov. Hutchinson says that "the inhabitants have a veneration for" this "spring, which runs from the hill into the river, above the great bridge. The sight of this spring caused him to stop his canoe and land there."<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Williams afterwards settled and built his house on the lot which contains this spring, which he sold to Gideon Crawford,<sup>4</sup> (a gentleman who came from Scotland), and which is now<sup>5</sup> owned by some of Mr. Crawford's descendants. He

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konk river on Mr. Williams' first visit to the Indians settled at Moshawsuck, (now Providence), in the former part of the same year in which Mr. Williams first came to settle with his family there; no other person except the said Thomas Angell, being then in company with him." He then goes on to mention the salutation "What Cheer," as given by the Indians. There is every reason to consider this the true version of this interesting affair.

(1) To quote still farther from the deposition just cited, Governor Hopkins stated "that Mr. Williams made signs to the Indians that he would meet them on the western shore of the neck of land on which they (the Indians) then were; going himself in the canoe, by water, round Fox Point. Which he accordingly did and met the Indians at the famous rock and spring." (Foster Papers, VI. 19).

(2) St. John's Church.

(3) Hutchinson's "History of the colony of Massachusetts Bay," I. 38.

(4) Gideon Crawford "sent some of the first vessels from this port to the West Indies." Among the effects enumerated in his widow's will, (she died 1712), are "63 Bookes." (Dorr's "Providence," p. 166).

(5) "Now owned." As has already been indicated, the exact year in which this was written is not known. Perhaps about 1820.

had a wonderful faculty of conciliating the affections of the Indians. He studied their language, their manners, their customs, and their [*illegible*] together, and no man of the age had such an influence over them.<sup>1</sup>

Probably anticipating the result of his difficulties with the people of Massachusetts, he visited Miantonomo and Conanicus, the Narragansett sachems, with whom, he tells us, he "had several treaties" "in the yeare one thousand six-hundred and thirty-foure and in the yeare one thousand six-hundred and thirty-five,"<sup>2</sup> who assured him that he should not want land for a settlement; and on his coming to Moshassuck,<sup>3</sup> in the year 1636,<sup>4</sup> they gave<sup>5</sup> him the neck of land, extending from Fox Point to Pawtucket, between the two rivers, Moshassuck and Seeconk,<sup>6</sup> which he named Providence, (as he tells us<sup>7</sup> in another of his manuscripts), "in a sense of God's merciful Providence unto me in my distresse." He afterwards<sup>8</sup> purchased of the Indians the principal part of the county of Prov-

(1) See Ellis's "The red man and the white man in North America," p. 422.

(2) He here refers to the visits made to this region while a resident of Salem. Governor Winthrop, it will be remembered, wrote in January, 1636, of an intention which Mr. Williams was understood to have formed, "to erect a plantation about the Narragansett Bay." (Winthrop's Journal, I. 175).

(3) "The Neck" is frequently applied in early accounts to the peninsula between the Seeconk and Moshassuck rivers.

(4) It is noteworthy that he here gives the correct date. Compare pages 18, 26.

(5) It was not a "gift." The sachems state that they "two yeares since sold" [it] "unto Roger Williams." (R. I. Col. Records, I. 18). See p. 168-69, *post*.

(6) Besides this Neck, the sachems add that they "doe freely give unto him all that land from those rivers reaching to Pawtuxet river; as also the grass and meadows upon ye said Pawtuxet river." And, May 9, 1639, it was added that "up the streams of Pautuckqut and Pawtuxet without limits" they "might have for use of cattle." (R. I. Col. Records, I. 18.)

(7) See the "confirmatory deed" of Dec. 20, 1661. (R. I. Col. Records, I. 22).

(8) This refers to the "Memorandum" of May 9, 1639. (R. I. Col. Records, I. 18). See also the confirmatory deeds of May 29, 1659. (R. I. Col. Records, I. 35-38.)

idence,<sup>1</sup> and called the purchase "Providence Plantations,"<sup>2</sup> and intended that should have been the name of the colony which he founded. But in this he was partly disappointed, as will be hereafter mentioned.<sup>3</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

The<sup>4</sup> people of Providence and Rhode Island considered themselves as distinct and separate from each other, and acted for a considerable time as though they were two distinct governments.<sup>5</sup> But at length, finding their sentiments and intentions respecting religion to be similar, they agreed to unite

(1) All in fact, except what lies east of the Blackstone River and the Bay; and including on the south what is now a portion of Kent county. It is to be observed in this connection that the language "up the streams," "without limits," was used without an exact knowledge of the extent of the streams. To follow them to their sources would be to penetrate into the Massachusetts and Connecticut colonies. Compare with this the letter of Roger Williams, written Oct. 18, 1677. (Narragansett Club Pub., VI. 387-94).

(2) The expression "The Towne" is used on the records so early as June 16, 1636; "The town of Providence," so early as August 20, 1636; "Our plantation or planting at Mooshausick or Providence," March 24, 1637; "Our situation or plantation of New Providence," in the "Initial deed," and also Oct. 8, 1638; the "plantation of Providence," Oct. 27, 1660, and May 18, 1647. The patent of 1643-4 names the whole colony, "The Incorporation of Providence Plantations, in the Narragansett-Bay, in New England." (R. I. Col. Records, I. 145). But the charter of 1663, after making a reference to "the purchases and free inhabitants of our island, called Rhode Island, and the rest of the colony of Providence Plantations, in the Narragansett Bay in New England," proceeds to name the colony officially "Rhode Island and Providence Plantations." To this day this phraseology has remained unchanged.

It may be added, however, that the language of the charter, not very carefully drawn in all respects, besides citing the name of the colony as above in two instances, speaks of it in two other cases as the "English colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, in the Narragansett Bay, New England." The omission from the official records, of the words "English" and "in America" was in 1699 made the ground of a complaint against the colony by the Earl of Bellomont.

(3) It appears that he did not find an opportunity of returning to this subject, and it is not "hereafter mentioned."

(4) The fragment beginning at this point is found in the Foster Papers, IX. 30.

(5) Compare Gov. Hopkins's account, p. 38, *ante*.

and become one colony. To this end they jointly chose Mr. Roger Williams their agent, to go to England for a charter of incorporation. \* \* \* He obtained a charter<sup>1</sup> from the Earl of Warwick and other commissioners appointed by the parliament, dated March 14, 1643; granting the inhabitants of Providence (Warwick<sup>2</sup>), Portsmouth, and Newport full power to form themselves into a body corporate, and to make all their own laws. It was some considerable time after Mr. Williams's return with this charter before a mode of government could be agreed upon by all the towns. At length they established this form of government: The freemen of the whole colony chose<sup>3</sup> annually one chief officer whom they called president, and eight assistants, two in each town. Each of the four towns chose six representatives, then called commissioners. These had power to make laws, provided those laws were approved by the majority of the towns.

The presidents chosen under the charter [patent] were as follows: For the year 1647,<sup>4</sup> Mr. John Coggeshall, president; 1648, Mr. Jeremiah Clarke,<sup>5</sup> president; 1649, Mr. John Smith, president; 1650, Mr. Nicholas Easton, president;<sup>6</sup> ( )<sup>6</sup> \* \* \* In the year 1651 William Coddington went to England and procured from the council of state a commission constituting him governor of Rhode Island and the islands belong [ing to] the same; with which he returned in the fall of the year 1651. This caused great uneasiness in the

(1) Usually designated the "patent" of 1643-4. It is printed at p. 40-44, *ante*.

(2) "Warwick" is in the manuscript: It was not named in the patent; but was represented in the original organization under it.

(3) See Gov. Hopkins's account, p. 45-46, *ante*.

(4) It is more correct to write these dates 1647-48, 1648-49, etc.; as the political year was from May to May.

(5) May 16, 1648, "Mr. William Coddington was elected president;" and "Mr. Jeremy Clarke, assistant." But Mr. Coddington failed to attend, and it was ordered that "Mr. Jeremy Clarke shall supply ye place of the president." (R. I. Col. Records, I. 208, 209, 211).

(6) The manuscript has "ditto," for 1651. But Mr. Easton, as appears by the proceedings of the "Generall sessions of the committee at Providence," Nov. 4, 1651, had "deserted his office," R. I. Col. Records, I. 233.

colony. The colony then appointed Mr Roger Williams and John Clarke to go to the court of London, to procure Coddington's commission to be vacated, which they effected in the year 1653.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Williams returned, and on the 12th day of September, 1654, was chosen president,<sup>2</sup> agreeably to the charter and the laws of the colony; leaving Mr. Clarke (in England). [He] remained in England as the colony's agent, until he procured the present charter from Charles the 2d, 1663.

\* \* \* \* \*

This<sup>3</sup> year, (1663) on the 8th day of July, the present charter<sup>4</sup> of the colony was signed. By this charter Benedict Arnold was constituted first governor,<sup>5</sup> and William Brenton deputy governor.<sup>6</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

#### [KING PHILIP'S WAR.<sup>7</sup>]

\* \* \* The noted and warlike Indian, King Philip, \* \* \* having excited throughout New England an universal confederacy against the English, the inhabitants on the main land of this state felt its severe effects. The people who came with Roger Williams settled pretty much together on the Neck<sup>8</sup> of

(1) The true date of this "order of council" is Oct. 2, 1652. (Arnold's "Rhode Island," I. 242.

(2) R. I. Col. Records, I. 282.

(3) From Foster Papers, IX. 27.

(4) R. I. Col. Records, II. 1-21. In these printed records there is an error in the date printed at the head of the column, at pages 17-21.

(5) R. I. Col. Records, II. 22.

(6) This last paragraph is in the Foster Papers, IX. 27. Then follows a list of the governors and deputies, 1647-1711. (Foster Papers IX. 27-28.) There is also a list, 1663-1775, in the Foster Papers, X. 20. Brief biographical sketches are given, (Foster Papers, IX. 165-69.), of five of the incorporators named in this charter of 1663. These are William Coddington, John Clarke, William Brenton, John Porter, and Samuel Wilbore. Also of these three Providence proprietors,—Chad Brown, Richard Scott, and Hugh Bewit.

(7) From the Foster Papers, (beginning at IX. 313). This note is added: "From the information of the Hon'bl Gov. Hopkins, Friday, Oct. 12, 1771." A gap here occurs of twelve years, 1663-75.

(8) This term "The Neck" is frequently used before 1730, to denote the



land upon the eastward side of the river where Providence is now built. The free toleration allowed equally [to] every sect of Christians, and the moderation and equity of the government established, soon procured a great accession of inhabitants who generally chose to settle in and near the compact part of the new town; so that when the war of 1675 broke out, there were near an hundred houses in Providence;—which were destroyed (except five which were garrisoned),<sup>1</sup> when the town was burnt, in the war, on the 29th<sup>2</sup> day of March, 1676.<sup>3</sup> Rehoboth, a considerable town in the Massachusetts state, was burnt the day before.<sup>4</sup> This obliged many of the inhabitants of Providence to remove to Rhode Island,<sup>5</sup> which, in a great measure, was secure from the attacks of the Indians. This dreadful stroke upon Providence prevented in a great degree its being rebuilt while there was any apprehension of danger from the Indians, and served to give Newport that ascendancy which it has always<sup>6</sup> since had as the metropolis of the state. And it [is] very probable that if Providence had not been destroyed as it was, considering its inland situation upon the head of a beautiful river, (that) at this day it would have been the capital town of the state.

\* \* \* \* \*

As this war<sup>7</sup> was pursued with unremitted ardour by the na-

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compactly settled part of the town of Providence, in distinction from the rest.

(1) This is by far the largest estimate of houses made by any writer. Compare the note in Arnold's "Rhode Island," I. 409. See also the late Zachariah Allen's "Bi-centennial of the burning of Providence."

(2) There is a difference of one day also in the date of this assault. The 29th and 30th of March are both assigned by different writers. (Arnold's "Rhode Island" I. 409).

(3) "A list of the inhabitants who tarried in Providence during Philip's war" is in the Foster Papers, I. 3. The names are printed in Staples's "Annals," p. 164-65.

(4) March 28, 1675-76. Bliss's "History of Rehoboth."

(5) The Island of course is meant;—not the colony.

(6) This was written in 1771. It was not until 1800 that even in population Newport was surpassed by Providence.

(7) From the Foster Papers, IX. 315.



tives [it] spread universal destruction in New England, and threatened the total ruin and extirpation of the English from the country, and finally determined the fate of the Indians, proved their overthrow, and gave the undisputed possession [of] the whole country to the English. \* \* \* [It was] conducted by that great and memorable sachem whose Indian name was Metacomet. \* \* \*

Philip's father, for above thirty years after their arrival, and until his death,<sup>1</sup> was a great friend and benefactor of the English. Being sachem of all that part of the country where the English first settled, he had it in his power to do them very essential services. During his life the English of Plymouth colony had no apprehension of danger from the neighbouring Indians.

He died about 1656. He was succeeded by his eldest son, Wamsutta, or Alexander, who was suspected of plotting with the Narragansetts against the English. Mr. Josias Winslow, with 8 or 10 stout men, armed, took him by surprise at a hunting (*illegible*) about six miles distant from the English town,<sup>2</sup> and carried him to the governor.

This raised his indignation and affected him so much that it threw him into a fever which put a period to his life and plot together.<sup>3</sup> Philip, his brother, then young, succeeded him. He was of a bold, enterprising, undaunted spirit. His conduct soon raised suspicions of a design against the English. He was therefore sent for before the court in Plymouth. He on the 6th of August, 1662, signed a paper, expressing his desire "to continue the amity and friendship that had formerly been between the governor of Plymouth and his deceased father and brother;" and promised that he and his successors would always remain faithful subjects to the King of England, and that he

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(1) About 1656.

(2) Plymouth.

(3) Hubbard's "Narrative of the Indian wars," ed. 1865, I. 50-51.

would never alienate his lands without the consent of the government of New Plimouth.<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \* \* \*

The<sup>2</sup> following anecdote will serve to give the true reason of this war. After it was generally reported that war was like to break out between the Indians and the English, Mr. John Borden, (who then lived at Rhode Id.), who was intimately acquainted with Philip, determined to persuade him to use his endeavors for peace and amity, urging the reciprocal and [*illegible*] benefits which must result, to both parties. To which Philip replied in this striking manner:<sup>3</sup>

“The English, (who,) when they came first to this country were but an handful of people, forlorn, poor and distressed. My father was then sachem. He relieved their distresses in the most kind and hospitable manner. He gave them land to build and plant upon. He did all in his power to serve them. It was observed<sup>4</sup> that others of their own countrymen came and joined them. Their numbers rapidly increased. My father’s counsellors became uneasy and alarmed, lest, as they<sup>5</sup> were possessed of fire-arms, (which was not the case with the Indians) they should finally undertake to give law to the Indians and take from them their country. They therefore advised him to destroy them before they should become too strong and daring, and it should be too late. My father was also the father of the English. He represented to his counsellors and warriors that the English knew many sciences which the Indians did not; that they improved and cultivated the earth, and raised cattle and fruits, and that there was sufficient room in the country for both the English and the Indians. His advice prevailed. It was concluded to give victuals to the English. They flourished and increased. Experience taught that the advice of my father’s counsellors [was right?]. By various means they got possession of a great part of his territory. But he still remained their friend till he died.

My elder brother<sup>6</sup> became sachem. They pretended to sus-

(1) A memorandum here occurs in the manuscript, referring to the account in Hutchinson’s “History of Massachusetts Bay,” I. 277.

(2) From the Foster Papers, IX. 316.

(3) This is in print in Arnold’s “Rhode Island,” I. 394-95.

(4) Arnold’s version varies in several particulars from this account, which he follows in the main.

(5) The English.

(6) Wamsutta, or Alexander.

pect him of evil designs against them. He was seized and confined, [and] thereby thrown into sickness and died. Soon after I became sachem, they disarmed all my people. They tried my people by their own laws; (and) assessed damages against them, which they could not pay. Their land was taken. At length a line of division was agreed upon between the English and my people, and I myself was to be answerable.<sup>1</sup> Sometimes the cattle [of] the English would come into the cornfields of my people, as they did not make fences like the English.

I must then be seized and confined, till I sold another tract of my country for satisfaction of all damages and costs. Thus, tract after tract is gone. But a small part of the dominions of my ancestors remains. I am determined not to live till I have no country."<sup>2</sup>

[THE ADMINISTRATION OF SIR EDMUND ANDROS.<sup>3</sup>]

The historians of New England in general have set the character of Sir Edmund Andros in a very unfavourable light. He was employed by an arbitrary prince to establish in New England a mode of government which from its nature could not be otherwise than odious to the people in general, however well it might be administered. This raised against him a general prejudice which found its way into the histories of his time. When we consider the arduous task of bringing a whole people, of the bold and republican spirit of the New Englanders in general, even at that time, peaceably to submit to a government which depended solely upon the mind of one man;—That he himself was the man who gave absolute law to the whole country, & to a people who by their charters<sup>4</sup> had before the whole administration of gov[ernment] in their own hands, as they annually chose all their officers, and by their representatives

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(1) Arnold's version has "responsible."

(2) This statement, says Professor Diman, "preserves the traditions respecting the causes of the war that lingered in Philip's own neighborhood, and among those who knew him best." (Address at "Two hundredth anniversary of Bristol" p. 38).

(3) In manuscript in the Foster Papers, IX. 313-14. There is a gap here of about ten years, 1676-86. (Endorsed as being received from Governor Hopkins's verbal account, Oct. 12, 1781.)

(4) This was long the point at issue between the colonists and the home government.

made all their own laws ;—And when we consider, in addition to this, the natural reluctance there is in the mind of all men to surrender such great and darling privileges ; \* \* \* \* and that Sir Edmund Andros effected all this, and governed all New England for several years without any material difficulty, till the revolution<sup>1</sup> took place in England, we shall find more to admire<sup>2</sup> in his character than at first we should be aware of.

\* \* \* \* \*

Having occasion to go to Virginia<sup>3</sup> with a party of troops, \* \* Sir Edmund assisted with his own hands [in erecting a log house,] and as the timber \* \* hurt his shoulder, he clapped his hat under it. Which being observed by one of his officers, the officer begged his Excellency to desist, saying it was the business of his soldiers, and not his, to do such servile labour. Upon which Sir Edmund replied : “That officer who in a time of hurry, when it is necessary that labour should be done, will not diligently assist with his own hand, and set a good example to his troops, is unworthy to command.”

While Sir Edmund Andros was at Hartford, he met Dr. Hooker one morning, and said : “I suppose all the good people of Connecticut are fasting and praying on my account.” The Dr. replied : ‘Yes. We read : ‘This kind goeth not out but by fasting and prayer.’ ”<sup>4</sup>

[THE ADMINISTRATION OF GOV. SAMUEL CRANSTON<sup>5</sup>].

1698–1727.

He [Governor Cranston]<sup>6</sup> was elected gov[ernor] 1698,

(1)Of 1688-89.

(2)There is certainly very little in Sir Edmund Andros, or his character, to admire. The circumstances of his assuming command over the colonial governments were, it is true, such as tended to deepen unduly the prejudices against him. Yet, had it been otherwise, his character is not one which would have shone in any way.

(3)This part of the account, says the manuscript, was told to Gov. Hopkins “By Samuel Comstock.” (Foster Papers, IX. 314).

(4)Copied by Senator Foster from Dr. Stiles’s “manuscript itinerary,” (May 25, 1764). Foster Papers, IX. 239.

(5)Foster Papers, IX. 14. There is a gap of about ten years, 1688-98.

(6)His father, John Cranston, had also filled the governor’s chair, 1678-80.

and died [in office], April 26, 1726. He was elected 30 times gov[ernor] without opposition. What was very remarkable with respect to him was his singular and uncommon popularity during this long period. The people had the highest confidence in his political integrity. It remained unimpaired and undiminished during his life; and in the memorable year 1715 (when there was a great political revolution in the state,<sup>1</sup> and when every member of both houses of the legislature were [sic] turned out of office except himself and two of the deputies of Warwick),<sup>2</sup> he was not only continued unopposed as governor, but the interests of his family so increased that at [the] May session, 1716, his son, Samuel Cranston, Junr.,<sup>3</sup> was elected one of the deputies for Newport; and his nephew, John Cranston, [Jr.], also one of the deputies for the same town,<sup>4</sup> and at that session [John Cranston] was appointed speaker of the House of Representatives,<sup>5</sup> so that in the year 1716 three of the Cranston family were members of the legislature from the same town.<sup>6</sup>

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(1) See Arnold's "Rhode Island," II. 55.

(2) Anthony Low and Moses Lippit.

(3) R. I. Col. Records, IV. 203.

(4) Ibid.

(5) Ibid., IV. 209.

(6) At this point Senator Foster's memoranda are brought to a close.

It is proper to state the typographical considerations which have been observed in printing the two foregoing accounts.

Careful comparison has been made with the copy in each instance,—in Senator Foster's case, his own manuscript; and in Governor Hopkins's case, the *Gazette* copy, his manuscript not being preserved. The author's spelling has been reproduced throughout, but where quotations from other writers or from records are introduced in the text, the original has been followed, rather than the version of either Hopkins or Foster. What has just been said as to the spelling applies equally to the use of such characters as '&'; 'ye' for 'the'; and of figures, (as "8" for eight). It also applies to punctuation, with the exception of a portion of Senator Foster's memoranda, which, being hasty jottings, were left almost unpunctuated. It does not, however, apply to the use of capitals, and a sparing use of these letters is for the most part observed. No omissions occur in Governor Hopkins's narrative. Those in Senator Foster's memoranda are designated by asterisks, and occur (1) when the account had been fully given by Governor Hopkins; (2) where Senator Foster had himself used unnecessary repetition; and (3) in instances of irrelevant matter in the manuscript. The reader who is desirous of satisfying himself on these points can readily verify them from the bound manuscript volume constantly accessible in the library of the Rhode Island Historical Society.



## APPENDIX I.

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### THE SENTENCE OF EXPULSION.

The expression, "sentence of banishment," though used by Roger Williams himself in his earliest printed allusion to it,<sup>1</sup> and by Mr. Cotton in his "Reply,"<sup>2</sup> has been objected to, as being technically not a correct use of language. "Banishment," it is said, "involved a state which could banish, and that the banished parties be members of it;"<sup>3</sup> and neither of these conditions is in this instance fulfilled.<sup>4</sup> The objection is well taken; though it must be confessed, it is of somewhat slight consequence whether we adopt the word "banishment," or "expulsion,"<sup>5</sup> or some other. A much more important matter it is, to form a conception of the exact grounds on which this action was taken by the Massachusetts government. There are three classes of original authorities whose statements are entitled to be weighed in this connection;—the sentenced person himself; the writers who justify the sentence; and the court pronouncing it.

To begin with the latter, the first step officially taken was at the session of December 27, 1633;<sup>6</sup> and this action was

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(1) The work by Roger Williams, entitled "Mr. Cotton's letter lately printed, examined and answered," p. 40, etc. (Narragansett Club Pub., I. 324).

(2) "Reply to Mr. Williams his examination," by Rev. John Cotton, (Narragansett Club Pub., II. 19.)

(3) Dexter's "As to Roger Williams," p. 17.

(4) Compare the charter of the Massachusetts Bay Company. (Mass. Col. Records, I. 1-20).

(5) If the language of their charter be followed, the word "expulsion" apparently comes nearer the mark than any other. It was to "be lawfull \* \* \* to incounter, *expulse*," etc., all persons attempting their "annoy-aunce." (Mass. Col. Records, I. 18).

(6) Winthrop's Journal, I. 145.



solely concerned with the validity of the colony's claim under the royal charter, to the lands they possessed here. About one year later, (November 27, 1634.)<sup>1</sup> the court had under consideration this same ground of complaint and apprehension, and one other,—Mr. Williams's, "terming the churches of England anti-Christian." Early in the next year, (April 30, 1635,) <sup>2</sup> his objections publicly uttered against the "resident's oath" were considered. Not until the session of July 8, 1635,<sup>3</sup> were complaints drawn up in systematic order against him; laying to his charge, besides the matter of the "resident's oath," the peculiar theories which he held concerning "giving thanks" and praying with an "unregenerate man," and the method of punishing "the breach of the first table." In two of these instances a peculiarity of private religious opinion formed the issue; while in the other two the conception which he held as to the entirely separate functions of civil and religious authority was the point in question.

And finally, on the second week in October, 1635,<sup>4</sup> there are cited against him his two letters,<sup>5</sup> (probably written in July and August of that year), calling in question the action of the magistrates. Now in all these proceedings that which seems to have been the preëminent consideration in the mind of the court was the public teaching by an influential minister, of doctrines directly tending to undermine the status claimed by the colony

(1) Ibid, I. 180.

(2) Ibid., I. 188.

(3) Ibid., I. 193-94.

(4) Whether the date should be Oct. 8 or Oct. 9 may well be regarded as an open question. The evidence so comprehensively marshalled on this point by Professor Diman and Dr. Dexter, while it does not settle the question, makes it clear that the records had more than once failed to indicate the dates in case of an adjournment. (Compare Mass. Col. Records, I. 160-61; Winthrop's Journal, I. 204; Note by Professor Diman, in Narragansett Club Pub., II. 238-40; Diman's "Orations and essays," p. 138; Note in Dexter's "As to Roger Williams," p. 58-59).

(5) Mentioned in Winthrop's Journal, I. 195, 198.

under its charter,<sup>1</sup> and the authority of the existing magistrates. In view, therefore, not merely of his holding “newe & dangerous opinions, against the auctoritie of magistrates,” but of the disorganizing tendency of his “contentious”<sup>2</sup> assertion of them, the magistrates ordered that he should “depte out of this jurisdiccon within sixe weekes.”<sup>3</sup> They recognized that there was an “irrepressible conflict” between his views and theirs.

In the second place, the views of Mr. Cotton are on record. In a letter written<sup>4</sup> very soon after Mr. Williams’s departure, he lays emphasis on the fact that Mr. Williams had termed the churches of England anti-christian.<sup>5</sup> In a subsequent letter<sup>6</sup> he expressly declares: “Two things there were which (to my best observation and remembrance) caused the sentence of his banishment; and two others fell in, that hastened it.” These were:—(1) “His violent and tumultuous carriage against the patent;” (2) the oath; (3) “the heady and turbulent spirit” of his two letters already referred to; (4) his separation of himself from “all the churches in the country.” As regards Mr. Williams’s opinion concerning “the civill magistrate’s power,” Mr. Cotton was very far from considering this as the significant consideration<sup>7</sup> in the matter. He says, indeed: “There are

(1) “At an anxious crisis when the very existence of the company was at stake.” (Diman’s “Orations and essays,” p. 114). Compare Palfrey’s “New England,” I. 402–403. An examination of subsequent Rhode Island history will reveal the fact that “sensitiveness” as to charter rights was by no means limited to Massachusetts.

(2) Narragansett Club, Pub. II. 44. Yet if the charge of “contentiousness” be raised, it is one which, to quote the language of John Quincy Adams, characterized “the founders of New England,” equally with him. (Mass. Hist. Soc. Collections, 3d series, IX. 206).

(3) Mass. Col. Records, I. 160, 161.

(4) It did not, however, appear in print until 1643.

(5) Narragansett Club Pub., I. 299–310.

(6) “Reply to Mr. Williams his examination.” (Narragansett Club Pub., II. 44, 48, 50, 53).

(7) “It seems strange,” says Mr. George Washington Greene, “that neither the General Court nor Williams himself should have perceived that the only one [of the charges] wherein civilization was interested was that to

many knowne to hold both these opinions,” \* \* \* “and yet they are tolerated not onely to live in the commonwealth; but also in the fellowship of the churches.”<sup>1</sup>

But the question of greatest interest is, What was the ground assigned for his expulsion, by Roger Williams himself? And it is significant that his view of it is found to be almost identical with that of Mr. Cotton. He begins, it is true, with the question of civil authority. “What,” he asks, in his pamphlet of 1644, “were the grounds of such a sentence of banishment against me?;”<sup>2</sup> and he quotes with approval Governor Haynes’s summing up<sup>3</sup> of the court’s sentence. He goes on to remark that “The frame or constitution of their churches is but implicitly national,”<sup>4</sup> and that “the Common weale and church is yet but one, and hee that is banished from the one, must necessarily bee banished from the other also.”<sup>5</sup> In short, he finds a complete union of the civil and religious authority where he maintains there should be complete separation. But having thus stated briefly his position on this point, he passes on to devote the large remainder<sup>6</sup> of his tract to the technically theological question of “fellowship with the churches of England.” There is, therefore, to quote from Professor Diman, “substantial agreement between the two most important witnesses,”<sup>7</sup> (Mr. Williams and Mr. Cotton), as to the subordinate place which “that opinion of Mr. Williams’s concerning the province of the civil magistrate”<sup>8</sup> held in this transaction.

This, in fact, appears to be the view taken by nearly every writer down to the time when Governor Hopkins wrote. Cal-

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which they have assigned *the least conspicuous place.*” (Greene’s “Short history of Rhode Island,” p. 6).

(1) Narragansett Club Pub., II. 44.

(2) Ibid., I. 324.

(3) Ibid., I. 324-25.

(4) Ibid., I. 326.

(5) Ibid., I. 327.

(6) It embraces no less than 69 pages in the reprint. (Narragansett Club Pub., I. 327-96.)

(7) Note by Professor J. L. Diman, Narragansett Club Pub., II. 5.

(8) Ibid., II. 5.

lender, the earliest Rhode Island historian<sup>1</sup> of the affair, writing in 1738, thus enumerated the grounds of the sentence:—(1) the charges regarding prayer; (2) regarding breaches of the first table; (3) unlimited toleration or liberty of conscience; (4) his attitude towards the patent; (5) his objecting to the oath; (6) his renouncing communion with all the churches in the land. “For these things,” he adds, “he was at length banished the colony, as a disturber of the peace of the church and commonwealth.” Similar views might be quoted from other writers of that time. The stress which has since been laid on the element of religious liberty as a preëminent factor in the occurrence has perhaps resulted from regarding it too largely in the light of Roger Williams’s subsequent career, and reading into it an element which was chiefly of later development.<sup>2</sup> To quote once more from one of the most recent and most careful treatments of this subject, “the controversy had its origin” partly “in the exigencies of a unique community, where the instincts of a private corporation had not yet expanded into the more liberal policy of a body politic.”<sup>3</sup>

It is easy, in this nineteenth century, to look back and see how thoroughly impracticable, unsound, and unjust was the course of proscription upon which the Massachusetts Bay Colony had now entered;—a course which was to be carried to a fearful issue when dealing with the Quakers<sup>4</sup> twenty-five years later.

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(1) Century sermon, reprinted in R. I. Hist. Soc. Collections, IV. 72.

(2) It must be regarded as plainly due to the interpretation given to these incidents by Governor Hopkins and Senator Foster, that the impression has gained so strong a hold on the public mind. Callender, as above stated, gave no such interpretation to the incidents; nor does it appear that any writer did until the two just mentioned. Since then, however, nearly every writer using their materials, has followed their view of the case. See page 8, *ante*.

(3) Diman’s “Orations and essays,” p. 116.

(4) “There was,” says Dr. Ellis, “a steadily progressive legislation of enactments and penalties.” (Lowell Institute lectures, 1869, p. 117). But they were based on the theory, (proved finally to be erroneous), that the unwelcome Quakers would give way to some measure short of the death penalty. Compare also Hallowell’s “Quaker invasion of Massachusetts.” (1883).

But to the colonists of that day, this seemed a perfectly natural and unavoidable course. To do otherwise than they did, says one of Roger Williams's biographers,

"was to subvert the foundations of their civil and religious institutions ; and it became in their opinion a measure of self-preservation, and of paramount duty to God, to expel Mr. Williams from the colony."<sup>1</sup>

The action of the Massachusetts government cannot be held to be justifiable. It is, however, by no means unaccountable.

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## APPENDIX II.

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### THE PRINCIPLE OF CIVIL AND RELIGIOUS SEPARATION, AS HELD BY ROGER WILLIAMS.

It is perhaps easy to lay too much stress on the connection of Roger Williams with the well known doctrine of freedom of conscience. It is altogether probable that by natural temperament, he would be strongly inclined to embrace a belief of this kind. Yet he must have had abundant opportunity, even before leaving England, for familiarizing himself with the utterances in favor of toleration, in one form and another. They may be traced from Sir Thomas More's "Utopia", (1516), and the utterances of the Chancellor de l'Hopital, in France, (so early perhaps as 1550) ;<sup>2</sup> through the degrees of the Diet of Augsburg, (1555) ; the writings of Menno, (1561) ; and the writings of Robert Brown, ("the father," as he is called by Masson,<sup>3</sup> "of the crude English independency of Elizabeth's reign"), down to books published in Mr. Williams's own time. "The tract," says Mr. Masson,<sup>4</sup> which "is, certainly, the earliest known English publication in which full liberty of conscience is openly advocated," is "Religious peace," by Busher, a working man of London,

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(1) Knowles's "Roger Williams," p. 80.

(2) Hallam's "Constitutional history of England," ch. 3.

(3) Masson's "John Milton," III. 100.

(4) Ibid., III. 102.



published in 1614. It had been preceded in 1609 by Jacob's "Humble supplication for toleration."<sup>1</sup>

It is therefore plainly an error, (to quote from Dr. Ellis), to assume that the assertion of "the right and safety of liberty of conscience" was "a novelty that was alarming, *because* it was a novelty, to the authorities of Massachusetts." "They knew it well, and what must come of it, and they did not like it." "They identified freedom of conscience with the objectionable and mischievous results which came of it,"<sup>2</sup> which (he suggests), they had personally observed and abhorred in England. "They had an intense—by us an unappreciable—horror and distrust of those who professed to be favored with private interpretations, revelations, and inspirations."<sup>3</sup>

Great confusion, it is scarcely necessary to add, has resulted from attributing to the founders of the Massachusetts colony the desire to establish "a refuge for civil and religious freedom."<sup>4</sup> A careful study of their charter,<sup>5</sup> of their legislation, and of their private and public utterances, reveals no such purpose. "They did not cross the Atlantic," says President Quincy, "on a crusade, in behalf of the rights of mankind in general, but in support of their own rights and liberties."<sup>6</sup>

But it is an even more interesting question to consider how far this idea was consciously in the mind of Roger Williams himself, in settling here. An examination of his career will show that the growth in his own mind of this far-reaching prin-

(1) Besides the review of authorities in Masson's chapter already quoted from, see the careful tracing of the principle by Rev. Dr. H. M. Dexter, in his volume, "As to Roger Williams," p. 86-87, *note*. Compare also Rev. Dr. Caldwell's remarks, *Baptist Quarterly*, VI. 397-98. Also Professor Diman's "Orations and essays," p. 127-28.

(2) Lowell Institute lectures, 1869, p. 84.

(3) *Ibid.*, p. 81.

(4) This language, strange to say, is that of Dr. Palfrey, usually a most careful and exact writer. (Palfrey's "History of New England," I. 314).

(5) The charter nowhere alludes to the matter. (Mass. Col. Records, I. 1-20).

(6) Quincy's "Address to the citizens of Boston," 200th anniversary, 1830, p. 25.



ciple was very gradual, and was not wholly foreseen. Not at Plymouth, not at Salem, not even in his final answers to the General Court at Newtown, did he so enunciate it as to leave no doubt as to its extent and significance. When once removed from association with the Massachusetts community; finding himself at Providence the centre of a company of "persons distressed for conscience,"<sup>1</sup> enlarging his original plan to include under a common government both this and the Aquidneck group of colonists avowedly associated for a similar purpose<sup>2</sup>;—he was brought into contact with the unforeseen problem of organizing a body politic, and it was thus that his theories crystallized into convictions. It was nearly ten years after he went out from the Salem community into the wilderness, before he published the first<sup>3</sup> of those singularly comprehensive treatises and letters<sup>4</sup> in which these views were expressed in their fulness. Moreover, it is necessary to remember that there is a doctrine which he was almost the first to enunciate, and which is inseparably associated with his name. Not so much the question of liberty of conscience, as "the far broader and more fruitful principle,"<sup>5</sup> to quote Professor Diman, of the complete and radical separation of civil and religious concerns. It was this which he advocated, says Professor Tyler, with "ripeness of judgment, uttermost sincerity, all-consuming earnestness, the inspiration of being in the right and of knowing it."<sup>6</sup>

By the year 1663 these principles of "full libertie in religious concernements" and the radical separation of the latter from

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(1) R. I. Col. Records, I. 22.

(2) R. I. Hist. Soc. Collections, IV. 83.

(3) "The bloody tenent, of persecution, for cause of conscience," 1644.

(4) See his admirable letter of Jan., 1655, (printed at pages 47–49 of this volume), in which he disclaims an indefensible and "infinite liberty of conscience;" that of August, 1654, in which he refers with evident affection to "the grand cause of truth and freedom of conscience," (page 52, *ante*); that of August 27, 1654, in which he felicitates the settlers of Providence, on being "free from the iron yokes of wolfish bishops," (page 53, *ante*); and other letters, printed in Vol. 6, of the Narragansett Club Publications.

(5) Diman's "Orations and essays," p. 127.

(6) Tyler's "History of American literature," I. 256.

the civil power, had become “household words” in Rhode Island. When therefore they make their appearance in the charter<sup>1</sup> of that year, by which the colony of Rhode Island was at last placed on a permanent footing, there is little occasion to wonder. Coming gradually to this position, Roger Williams had adopted it unconditionally, and did not now shrink from putting it to the severest tests of actual trial in administration. The far-reaching consequences of this permanent embodiment of it in organic law are not easily measured. It is not too much to say that but for Roger Williams’s masterly and convincing advocacy of these principles, they would not have become what they are to-day, “the accepted and fundamental maxim of American politics.”<sup>2</sup>

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### APPENDIX III.

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#### THE ORIGINAL RECORDS OF THE TOWN OF PROVIDENCE.<sup>3</sup>

Where as the Towne of providence did upon ye : 12th: <sup>4</sup> of August : 1678 : at a Towne meeting upon Ajournement, order and Appoynt mr. Roger <sup>5</sup>Williams, and Daniell Abbott, Clerke, to receive of John Whipple junr the former Towne Clerke, the Townes Books, and recordes belonging to the Towne now in

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(1) R. I. Col. Records, II. 5.

(2) Diman’s “Orations and essays,” p. 129. See also page 67 of this volume.

(3) This decidedly interesting schedule of the early records is preserved in the Foster Papers, I. 7. The portion above printed is written on the first two pages of a sheet of foolscap. On the back are the two endorsements given below, on an inside and outside fold, respectively.

(1) “A Coppie of my discharge for the Delivery of ye Towne Bookes in ye yeare 1678.”

(2) “List of the Records of the Town of Providence Signed by Roger Williams and Daniel Abbot in 1678.”

The first endorsement is evidently in the hand of John Whipple, Jr. The second is apparently that of Governor Hopkins.

(4) The letters “th” are written above the figures.

(5) The letter “w” throughout this record is so written as to make it practically impossible to pronounce it either a capital or a small letter.

ye handes of the sayd John Whipple, and to take a List of what they Receive, and to give ye sayd John Whipple a cleare and full Disscharge for the same, the which wee have Done, Vizt

Impri The Towne old Booke : Containeing of: 70:<sup>1</sup> leaves,  
and one not wrott upon, . . . . .

[Item<sup>2</sup>]. The longe Booke with parchment Covers Cheifely Consisting of recordes of Deedes, and of landes, Containeing of: 69 : leaves, and 7<sup>3</sup> peeces of leaves all wrott upon, besides two leaues pinned to an other, . . . . .

“ The Booke with Brass Clapses, Containeing of: 164 pages wrott upon besides fower leaves wrott upon which are not paged, as also : 18 :<sup>4</sup> leanes wrott upon at that end of ye Book where the Alphabett is,<sup>5</sup> . . . . .

“ Papers of Generall Assemblys Acts to ye number of: 24 :<sup>6</sup> Each of them haveng the seale of ye Collony affixed,<sup>7</sup> the seales being all of them in Good Condition nott defaced, saueing one which is an Assemblys Acts beareing date may ye<sup>8</sup> : 4 :<sup>9</sup> 166—<sup>10</sup> . . . . .

“ The new Booke, for ye entry of Towne Acts and orders, with eight pages wrott upon besides part of the ninth wrott upon,<sup>11</sup> . . . . .

(1) Above the figures, 70, is written “th,” perhaps by an inadvertency.

(2) The characters used before each item are an “M,” crossed with one line.

(3) The letters “th,” as before.

(4) The letters “th,” as before.

(5) The three foregoing entries plainly refer to the three earliest volumes of town records now preserved, known respectively as Nos. 1, 2, and 3. They were copied (1800) in the volume, lettered on the back “Deeds, etc., transcribed,” now preserved in the Registry of Deeds.

(6) The letters “th,” as before.

(7) No doubt official copies sent to the town by the colony.

(8) The letter “e” is written above the “y,” in “ye.”

(9) The letters “th,” as before.

(10) The fourth and final figure of this date has been worn from the margin through age.

(11) Obviously, from this description, the volume preserved in the City Clerk’s office, and lettered “Town meetings No. 3.”

- [Item]. The new Booke for ye entry of land euidences, with nine pages wrott upon, and part of ye tenth page wrott upon,<sup>1</sup> . . . . .
- “ The new Book for ye entry of ye Towne Counsell's Acts, there being part of one page of ye sayd Booke wrott upon . . . . .
- “ A small paper Book Containeing the Enrolement of wills<sup>2</sup> . . . . .
- “ Courts Acts sewed to geather, in ye manner of: 2:<sup>3</sup> Books, As also seuerall Courts Acts made up in roubles to the number of: 18:<sup>4</sup> with noe scales Afixed, . . .
- “ Seuerall<sup>5</sup> Coppies of William ffeildes and William Carpenters papers . . . . .
- “ A Deed of Gift from Richard Waterman to his Grand Children the Children of Resolved Waterman (Deceased)
- “ The old Deed called the Towne Euidence . . . . .
- “ The Deed of Confirmation from Cussuckquansh,<sup>6</sup> and nenekelah with Richard Smith junr Testimony pinned thereto, . . . . .
- “ The deed of Confirmation Scattupp, and Quequagonuett.
- “ The deed of Confirmation from Canjanaquant, being alsoe subscribed Aiaquaomitt. the three Deedes of Confirmations being all indorsed<sup>7</sup> with Testimonys on the back sides . . . . .
- “ The Deed in parchement from mr. Roger Williams to the Towne of providence<sup>8</sup> . . . . .

(1) Apparently the volume of Providence Deeds, numbered I, in the office of the Registry of Deeds.

(2) No volume now on file in the Probate Office corresponds to this description.

(3) The letters “th,” as above.

(4) The letters “th,” as above.

(5) The letters “Cop” had been written before “Seuerall,” and struck out.

(6) “Cussuckquansh,” as signed by him.

(7) The “e” is written above the word.

(8) For the five foregoing entries see the (printed) R. I. Col. Records, I. 18, 22-25, 30-38; also, (for the Indian deeds), *Narragansett Historical Register*, II. 222-25, 287-97.

- [Item]. The Inuenty of the Estate of John Clawson, Ass alsoe  
 an account in a paper by Thomas olney senr of ye  
 Disspossession of John Clawsons :<sup>1</sup> Goodes, . . . . .
- “ The Indenture of Daniell Comstock . . . . .
- “ The Bond of Joshua Winsor and James Ashton, as also  
 the Award of Arbetration upon a defferance betweene  
 ye sayd Winsor, and James Ashton, . . . . .
- “ As alsoe seuerall papers wherein was the Comittys Act,  
 to ye number of: 15 :<sup>2</sup> Delivered by mr. Williams to  
 John Whipple the former Clerke . . . . .
- “ As alsoe a roule of papers, being most of them bills, some  
 of them being Answered and some of them reffered . . .
- “ As also seuerall other papers. All the rest of the Towne  
 Recordes not here perticularized with a linning Bagg  
 in which they are In Closed . . . . .

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We whose names are here under sub-  
 scribed, being impowered by an order of this Towne as  
 before sayd, have this Twenty third<sup>3</sup> day of August :  
 1678 Receiued of John Whipple Junr the former Towne  
 Clerke, all the sayd Books, papers, parchments, and  
 writeings herein before mentioned and perticularized,  
 which belong to ye Towne, And Doe thereof in the  
 Townes behalfe fully, clearely, and absolutely, Acquitt  
 and Discharge the sayd John Whipple Junr of and from  
 all papers that Conserne this Towne.

In Wittness whereof wee doe here unto sett our handes the  
 day and yeare aboue sayd: . . . . .

[Signed] ROGER WILLIAMS

DANIELL ABBOTT Clerke—

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(1) The final “s” is written above the word.

(2) The letters “th” as above.

(3) The word “Seaventeenth” was at first written here, but was struck out, and  
 replaced by “Twenty-third.”

Memorandum,<sup>1</sup> the wordes Twenty Third were enterlined  
before these presents were Delivered as wittness our  
handes . . . . .

[Signed] ROGER WILLIAMS  
DANIELL ABBOTT Clerke.<sup>2</sup> . .

(1) This entry occurs at the left of the signature above given.

(2) In the above copy, the spelling, punctuation, and capitalization of the manuscript have been exactly reproduced.

This transfer of the records took place, it will be observed, soon after the close of King Philip's War. John Whipple, Jr., was one of those who "tarried in Providence during Philip's war," and his devoted care of the records merits special remembrance.

As will readily be seen from the above schedule, there are unfortunate gaps in the records, (as at present preserved in the archives of the city), which did not exist in 1678. Certainly argument can scarcely be needed, to show the importance of printing these early records, for preservation; for it is plain that their gradual diminution and consequent destruction, through constant handling, can only be regarded as a question of time. Action looking to such preservation, (the printing of the "first four books of records of the town of Providence"), was taken by the City Council, July 2, 1884.



NOTE. A letter written by Roger Williams, in behalf of the town of Providence, to Sir Henry Vane, in England, has been previously quoted from. (See page 53, *ante*). The variation of Governor Hopkins's version from that in the colony records has already been referred to, and was partially indicated at page 53 by the use of brackets. It has been thought best, however, to reprint the entire letter, following the text of the R. I. Col. Records, I. 287-89.

PROVIDENCE, 27th, 6th mo., 1654 (so called).

Although we are aggrieved at your late retirement from ye helm of publicke affaires, yet we rejoyce to reape ye sweete fruits of your rest in your pious and lovinge lines most seasonably sent to us. Thus Sir, your sun, when he retires his brightness from ye world, yet from ye very cloud we perceave his presence and enjoy some light and heat, and sweete refreshinge. Sir, your letters directed to all and everie ye particular townes of this Providence Colonie. Surely, Sir, amongst ye many providences of ye Most High, towards this Towne of Providence, and this Providence Colonie, wee cannot but see, apparently, his gracious hand, providing your honorable selfe for so noble and true a friend to an outcast and despised people. From ye first beginning of this Providence Colonie (occasioned by ye banishment of some in these parts from ye Massachusetts), we say ever since, to this very day, we reaped ye sweete fruits of your constant loving kindness and favour towards us. Oh, Sir, whence, then, is it that you have bent your bow and shot your sharpe and bitter arrowes now against us? Whence is it yt you charge us with divisions, disorders, &c. Sir, we humbly pray your gentle acceptance of our two-fold answer.

First, we have been greatly disturbed and distressed by ye ambition and covetousness of some amongst ourselves. Sir, we were in compleate order until Mr. Coddington (wanting yt publike, self-denyeing spirit which you commend to us in your letter), procured by most untrue information, a monopolie of part of ye Colonie, viz. : Rhode Island to himselfe, and so occasioned generall disturbances and distractions. Secondly, Mr. Dyre (with no less want of a publike spirit), being by private contentions with Mr. Coddington; and being betrusted to bring from England ye letter of ye Councell of State for our re-unitinge, he hopes for a recruit to himselfe by other men's goods; and (contrarie to the State's intentions and expressions), plungeth himself and some others, in most unnecessary and unrighteous plunderings, both of Dutch and French and English; all to our great grieve, who protested against such abuse of our power from England; and ye end of it, even to ye shame and reproach of himselfe, and ye very English name itselfe, as all these parts doe witness.

Sir, our second answer is, (yt we may not lay all ye load upon other men's backs), yt possibly a sweete cup has rendered many of us wanton and too active. For we have long drunck of the cup of as great liberties as any people yt we can heare of under the whole Heaven. We have not only been long free (together with all English), from ye iron yokes of

wolfish Bishops, and their Popish ceremonies (against whose cruell oppressions, God raised up your noble spirit in Parliament); but we have sitten quiet and drie from ye streams of blood spilt by ye warr in our native country. We have not felt ye new chains of ye Presbyterian tyrants; nor (in this colonie) have we been consumed with ye over-zealous fire of ye (so called) Godly and Christian magistrates. Sir, we have not known what an excise means. We have almost forgotten what tythes are; yea, or taxes, either to Church or Commonwealth. Sir, we could name other speciall priviledges, (ingredients of our sweete cup), which your great wisdom knows to be very powerfull (except more than ordinarie watchfulness), to render ye best of men wanton and forgetfull. But, blessed be your love, and your loving heart and hand, awakening any of our sleepe spirits by your sweete alarms; and blessed be your noble family, (roote and branch), and all your pious and prudent engagements and retirements. We hope you shall noe more complaine of ye saddinge of your loving heart, by ye men of Providence Towne or Providence Colonie; but yt sir, when we are gone and rotten, our posteritie and children after us, shall read in our Towne records, ye pious and favourable letters and loving kindness to us; and this our answer, and reall endeavours after peace and righteousness; and to be found. [,] Sir, Your most obliged, and most humble servants, the Towne of Providence, in Providence Colonie, in New-England.

GREGORIE DEXTER, *Towne Clarke.*

To ye truly hon'ble Sir Henry Vane, at his house, at Belleaw, in Lincolnshire, these present.



## SKETCH OF THE LIFE AND SERVICES OF THEODORE FOSTER.

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SENATOR IN CONGRESS FROM RHODE ISLAND, 1790-1803.

Theodore Foster was born in Brookfield,<sup>1</sup> Mass., April 29, 1752. He was the eldest of a family of six children; and with the exception of a sister who died before his birth, he was the first born of the family. His father, Judge Jedediah Foster of the Superior Court of Judicature of Massachusetts,<sup>2</sup> was a descendant, in the fifth generation, from Reginald Foster,<sup>3</sup> who

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(1) In the portion since incorporated as West Brookfield.

(2) See Whitmore's "Massachusetts civil list," p. 74.

(3) See Dr. E. J. Forster's genealogy, the "Descendants of Reginald Foster." (Boston, 1876). Also printed in the *New-England Historical and Genealogical Register*, XXX. 83-102. \* Among Reginald Foster's descendants were Rufus Choate, the distinguished lawyer, and George Peabody, the eminent London merchant.

Among other descendants of Reginald Foster in public life may be mentioned the following, who, like Mr. Choate and Senator Theodore Foster, have served in the national congress: Hon. Abiel Foster, one of the original members of the House, from New Hampshire, serving from 1789 to 1791, and from 1795 to 1803; Hon. Dwight Foster, (brother to Theodore), member of the House, from Massachusetts, 1793 to 1799, and of the Senate, 1800 to 1803; and Hon. William D. Williamson, member of the House, from Maine, 1821 to 1823. Hon. Lafayette S. Foster, member of the Senate, from Connecticut, 1855 to 1867, believed himself to be a descendant of Reginald, but did not succeed in establishing the connection.

The number of Reginald Foster's descendants who have become distinguished as jurists is equally striking. Among them are included Senator Dwight Foster, above mentioned, (chief-justice of the Worcester County, Mass., Court of Common Pleas); his father, Judge Jedediah Foster, (of the Massachusetts Superior Court of Judicature). his grandson, the late Judge Dwight Foster, of Boston, of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court; also Judge Abiel Foster, above mentioned, (chief-justice of the Hillsborough County, N. H., Court of Common

settled at Ipswich in Essex County, in 1638. Through his mother, Dorothy Dwight,<sup>1</sup> he traced a descent from a most distinguished ancestry. Among the ancestors on this side are John Dwight, an early settler of Dedham; William Pyncheon,<sup>2</sup> whose name stands next to Winthrop as one of the incorporators, in the charter of 1629,<sup>3</sup> and who signed the agreement at Cambridge,<sup>4</sup> and came in the fleet with Winthrop.<sup>5</sup> Also no less than six clergymen,<sup>6</sup> two of whom filled suc-

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Pleas); Judge Oliver Peabody, (of the Rockingham County, N. H., Court of Common Pleas); Judge Stephen Peabody, (of the Hancock County, Me., Court of Common Pleas); and Judge Charles A. Peabody, (of the Supreme Court of the State of New York).

His descendants have also been represented on college faculties, as follows: Professor Andrew P. Peabody, (Harvard College); Professor Henry W. Haynes, (University of Vermont); and President Samuel L. Caldwell, (Vassar College).

(1) See B. W. Dwight's "History of the descendants of John Dwight, of Dedham, Mass.," (1874), II. 633-34.

(2) See the "Memoir of William Pyncheon," by Charles Stearns, in the *New-England Historical and Genealogical Register*, XIII. 289-97, with portrait. The original portrait, from which this engraving is copied, hangs on the walls of the Essex Institute, at Salem, Mass. As is well known, he was the founder of Springfield, Mass., where his descendants of that name are still found. Senator Foster, as appears from a memorandum of his, ("Foster Papers," IX. 239), spent some portion of his youth, (probably while fitting for college), in the household of his kinsman. Edward Pyncheon, at Springfield. A curious manuscript catechism of the original settler, William Pyncheon, was owned by Senator Foster and is preserved in the Foster Papers, XII. 2. It covers about fifty pages of closely written manuscript, in Mr. Pyncheon's own hand. It is beautifully executed, a part of the writing being in "printed letters," instead of script. It would be interesting to know whether this is referred to in a letter signed by Governor Endicott and others, October 20, 1652, (Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll. 3d series, I. 35-37). There is a life of him, apparently in Senator Foster's handwriting. (Foster Papers, VI. 10, 11). Mr. Foster also left quite full genealogical memoranda of the Pyncheon family, also of the Dwight and Foster families. (Foster Papers, VIII. 1, 2, 6).

(3) Massachusetts Bay Colony Records, I. 6.

(4) Printed in Young's "Chronicles of the first planters of the colony of Massachusetts Bay," p. 281-82.

(5) Winthrop's Journal, I. 11.

(6) Rev. Nathaniel Rogers, Ipswich, Mass.; Rev. William Hubbard, Ipswich, Mass.; Rev. Henry Flint, Braintree, Mass.; Rev. Edward Taylor, West-

cessively the position of minister of Ipswich, Rev. Nathaniel Rogers,<sup>1</sup> and Rev. William Hubbard.<sup>2</sup> The latter is the author of the "General history of New-England,"<sup>3</sup> which, before the valuable manuscripts of Gov. Bradford and Gov. Winthrop were put in type, was very generally used for reference.<sup>4</sup>

Of Judge Foster's four sons,<sup>5</sup> two received a college education. He himself was a graduate from Harvard College in the class of 1744,<sup>6</sup> but the two boys were sent to Rhode Island College,<sup>7</sup> then at Warren, R. I., (now Brown University). Theodore entered in September, 1767, being graduated in the class of 1770,<sup>8</sup> the second class sent out by the college.

field; and Rev. Henry Whitfield, Guilford, Conn.; and James Fitch, Saybrook, Conn.

Mr. Taylor was the grandfather of President Stiles, of Yale College, who was thus an own cousin to Senator Foster's maternal grandmother. Another president of Yale College, President Timothy Dwight, was second cousin to Senator Foster's mother.

(1) See Kimball's "Sketch of the ecclesiastical history of Ipswich," (1823), p. 17-19.

(2) Sibley's "Harvard graduates," I. 54-62.

(3) This history forms volumes V and VI of the 2d series of the "Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society."

(4) Another of his ancestors was Charles Hoare, Jr., Sheriff of Gloucester, England, among whose descendants are included President Leonard Hoar, of Harvard College, Hon. George F. Hoar, U. S. Senator from Massachusetts, E. Rockwood Hoar, formerly U. S. Attorney-general, William M. Evarts, formerly Secretary of State, Josiah Quincy; and John Quincy Adams. (Sibley's "Harvard graduates," I. 587).

(5) Theodore, b. 1752; Theophilus, b. 1754; Dwight, b. 1757; Peregrine, b. 1759.

(6) Harvard Quinquennial Catalogue, 1880, p. 19. Among his classmates were Thomas Cushing, of the First Continental Congress, and Rev. Dr. Edward Bass, the first bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church, in the diocese of Massachusetts.

(7) "Rhode Island College," incorporated by the General Assembly, 1764; in operation at Warren, R. I., 1765-70; removed to Providence, May, 1770; name changed to "Brown University," 1804. It is the 7th college founded in America.

(8) Guild's "History of Brown University," p. 14. See also p. 348, where the parts assigned at this commencement, Sept. 5, 1770, are printed. Mr. Foster delivered "An intermediate oration on catholicism," was the



Dwight, entering in 1770, was graduated in the class of 1774.<sup>1</sup> Both of the young men remained in Providence, and were engaged in the study of the law. In 1773, Theodore, on receiving his master's degree, delivered an oration on the "future greatness of the American colonies,"<sup>2</sup>—certainly a somewhat suggestive subject for the last year but one before the events of Lexington and Concord. Dwight, on being graduated in 1774, immediately began the study of the law in his brother's office.<sup>3</sup> During the years 1774 to 1779, both were well known as Rhode Island public men, and both were apparently destined to become permanently attached to this state. But the death of their father in 1779<sup>4</sup> changed the course of events. Dwight, who in 1778, had been admitted to the Providence County bar,<sup>5</sup> at once returned to Brookfield,<sup>6</sup> where he took his father's place in public life, and thenceforward until his own death in 1823 was identified with the interests of Massachusetts.<sup>7</sup>

Theodore remained in Providence. In 1773 he was

respondent in "a syllogistic disputation in Latin," (see the Latin programme still preserved), and took part in "a forensic dispute."

(1) Guild's "History of Brown University," p. 352.

(2) The full title is somewhat cumbersome;—"The discovery, progressive settlement, present state, and future greatness of the American colonies." (Guild's "Brown University," p. 349). The account is quoted from Dr. Solomon Drowne, (class of 1773), and it may be that the above is Dr. Drowne's description of the oration, rather than its title.

(3) Dwight's "Descendants of John Dwight," II. 653.

(4) He died Oct. 7, 1779, while a member of the Massachusetts Constitutional convention of 1779-80. The sermon preached at his funeral, Oct. 19, 1779, by Rev. Nathan Fiske, was printed at Providence, by Bennett Wheeler, in the same year; and contains interesting biographical material at the end.

(5) Dwight's "Descendants of John Dwight," II. 653.

(6) *Ibid.*, II. 653.

(7) A nephew of Isaiah Thomas, the distinguished printer of Worcester, enumerates as "among the most distinguished" members of the Worcester bar, in the years from 1788 to 1796, Levi Lincoln, Dwight Foster, Solomon Strong, Edward Bangs, and Piny Merriek. In another connection he mentions Dwight Foster, as among the three or four writers whose "powerful pens" enabled Isaiah Thomas to make his paper (the

created justice of the peace,<sup>1</sup> and in 1775 was elected town clerk of Providence. The latter office he held until 1787,<sup>2</sup> his term of twelve years being exceeded by that of only one subsequent town clerk.<sup>3</sup> In May, 1777, he was made sheriff of Providence County.<sup>4</sup> He served as deputy from Providence in the General Assembly,<sup>5</sup> in 1776, (Oct.); 1777, (Oct.); 1778; 1779; 1780, (Feb. and Oct.); and 1781.

He never was in the army. He was however a most efficient secretary of the Rhode Island Council of War,<sup>6</sup> which from 1776 to 1781, did much to enable Rhode Island to meet approximately the demands made upon her for troops, money, and supplies. His father, Judge Foster, was appointed,<sup>7</sup> May 28, 1773, a member of a committee of correspondence chosen by the Massachusetts House of Representatives, one of whose instructions was that they should "inform themselves particularly of the principles and authority on which was constituted a court of inquiry, held in Rhode Island;"<sup>8</sup>—namely the "Gaspee" commission which had been in session at Newport.<sup>9</sup> His youngest brother, Peregrine Foster, was in service with General Washington,<sup>10</sup> in his West Point campaign, in 1780, and

*Massachusetts Spy*), a noteworthy force in the struggle for colonial rights. (E. S. Thomas's "Reminiscences," II. 15, 16).

(1) In June, 1772, he was appointed assistant clerk of the Superior Court. (Foster Papers, XI. 48).

(2) Staples's "Annals," p. 654.

(3) Nathan W. Jackson served from 1799 to 1829. Staples's "Annals," p. 654.

(4) R. I. Col. Records, VIII. 221.

(5) *Ibid.*, VIII. 3, 386; IX. 3, 382. Also, Staples's "Annals," p. 652.

(6) For the work assigned to this body, see R. I. Col. Records, VIII. 57. The manuscript records of the Council of War, most of them in Mr. Foster's hand, are at the State House, in Providence.

(7) R. I. Col. Records, VII. 230.

(8) R. I. Col. Records VII. 229.

(9) Theodore Foster was assistant clerk, "in the inquiry which was holden" by the Superior Court, in June, 1772, with reference to this Gaspee occurrence, (as he states in a letter to Dr. John Mawney, Sept. 26, 1825.) (Foster Papers, XI. 48).

(10) He "was present at the execution of Major André," in 1780. Dwight genealogy, II. 657.

was doubtless in Rhode Island during a part of the war at least. Peregrine Foster, in 1782, removed to Providence, "where he read and practised law for a few years, with his brother Theodore."<sup>1</sup> Theodore Foster's more distant kinsman, Moses Foster, of Ipswich, Mass., was in service, moreover, in the Rhode Island campaigns of 1778 and 1779.<sup>2</sup> Theodore's own service, however, was administrative instead of military.<sup>3</sup>

In 1780 his name was used as a candidate for delegate to the Continental Congress from Rhode Island. His friend, General James Mitchell Varnum<sup>4</sup> was the successful competitor, being elected by 17 majority. Mr. Foster's career in the politics of the country was thus postponed until a later period, when the position was one of greater honor and dignity, and to membership in a body which commanded greater respect than the Continental Congress in its last years.

In 1781 occasion arose for dividing the town of Scituate, one of the towns formed at the first division of the county of Providence in 1730-1; and the town in which Governor Hopkins's early years had been spent. The new town, the first to become incorporated under the independent existence of the colonies, comprised the western portion. It was named Foster,<sup>5</sup> in honor of a citizen whose services had already been of value to the state. Later in life, it became his home.<sup>6</sup>

(1) Dwight Genealogy, II. 657.

(2) He was in Col. Wade's regiment of Massachusetts men. See the Massachusetts Revolutionary Rolls, in manuscript, at the State House, Boston.

(3) His connection with various commissions, trusts, etc., may be studied in R. I. Col. Records, VII. 562; VIII. 3, 59, 109, 143, 386, 529; IX. 3, 30, 179, 382, 429.

(4) See Updike's "Memoirs of the Rhode Island bar," p. 154-55.

(5) "An act for dividing the town of Scituate, and incorporating the west end thereof into a township, to be distinguished and known by the name of Foster." R. I. Col. Records, IX. 460. "Taking its name from Theodore Foster," (Staples's "Annals," p. 598).

(6) From the time of his return to Rhode Island from congress, the most of his time was passed at the estate which he had acquired at Foster. (See the letters of Dr. Solomon Drowne, 1803-20, kindly lent the editor by Mr. Henry T. Drowne). His office in 1773 was not far from the Great

The years between the close of the war in 1783, and his election to congress in 1790, were those of his chief activity in his profession as a lawyer.<sup>1</sup> He had married in 1771,<sup>2</sup> the next year after being graduated from college, Lydia Fenner,<sup>3</sup> daughter of Capt. Arthur Fenner, Jr.,<sup>4</sup> who was afterwards governor of the state for fifteen years, 1790-1805. Three children had been born to him, two of whom were still living in 1783.<sup>5</sup> As town clerk, his office was in the Market-house, in Market Square, erected in 1773. His own office was doubtless here also, although at first on the other side of the river.<sup>6</sup> During the years 1776 to 1785 also, he was brought into the closest association with Governor Stephen Hopkins, now an invalid, retired from active life and withdrawn through his infirmity from participation in the councils of the Continental Congress. The two men, whose historical tastes furnished a common bond of sympathy, systematically coöperated in the collection and preservation of historical material.<sup>7</sup> In 1794, Senator Foster's only daughter, Theodosia, became the wife of Governor Hopkins's grandson, (and namesake), Stephen Tillinghast.

The war was now over, but there was by no means an end of the difficulties of Rhode Island. The uneasiness which had been manifesting itself for several years became still more

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Bridge, on the west side of the river. See advertisement in *Providence Gazette*, Nov. 27, 1773.

(1) A "Docket," 1785-91, of Theodore Foster is in the Foster Papers, VI. 22.

(2) Oct. 27, 1771.

(3) His much beloved wife died in June, 1801.

(4) Mrs. Foster's brother, James Fenner, also became governor of the state, serving from 1807 to 1811, and from 1824 to 1831, and was United States senator, 1805-7.

(5) Theodosia Foster, b. 1772; Theodore Dwight Foster, b. 1780.

(6) His house at about this time was near the present Court House, on Benefit St. Compare the French list of officers' quarters in Providence, 1780, in the possession of Henry T. Drowne, of New York, where it is entered as "Back street au delà du pont." (Printed in Stone's "Our French allies," p. 321).

(7) See page 8, *ante*.

pronounced, and in the spring election of 1786<sup>1</sup> the government passed into the hands of the discontented element. One of the first movements of this General Assembly was to pass "An act for emitting one hundred thousand pounds"<sup>2</sup> in bills of credit, a proceeding which in the light which the issue of continental money during the war had thrown upon the whole question of paper currency, was an almost colossal act of folly. The resolution making provision for the salaries of judicial officers was repealed.<sup>3</sup> The action of the previous legislature, making provision for the collection by the national government, of the necessary excise tax,<sup>4</sup> was suspended. So also was the levy of a tax of £20,000,<sup>5</sup> but this was soon afterwards taken up again and passed.<sup>6</sup> But it was in connection with the issue of paper money that the most extraordinary proceedings were entered on. "The law," says Judge Potter, "directed that these bills should pass in all kinds of business, and in payment of former contracts, at par with specie."<sup>7</sup> Within about a month, this was followed by an act "subjecting such as should refuse to receive the bills issued upon the terms specified, to a penalty of a hundred pounds,"<sup>8</sup> and to trial by a special court, convened within three days, and without a jury. The alternative, in case of refusal to receive the bills, was imprisonment; "and from this judgment there was no appeal."<sup>9</sup>

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(1) Gov. Greene, who had been in the chair since 1778, was succeeded by Gov. Collins. Of the governor's council of assistants three were new, and of the sixty-nine deputies, forty-three were new. See R. I. Col. Records, X. 190-92.

(2) R. I. Col. Records, X. 197. The text of the act is in the printed "schedule," or "Acts and Resolves."

(3) *Ibid.*, X. 196.

(4) *Ibid.*, X. 199. Compare also X. 229.

(5) *Ibid.*, X. 199.

(6) *Ibid.*, X. 206.

(7) "Some account of the bills of credit or paper money of Rhode-Island," (R. I. Historical Tracts, No. 8), p. 118.

(8) *Ibid.*, p. 119.

(9) *Ibid.*, p. 120.



The town of Providence, throughout this temporary political madness, appears to have interposed a constant, steady, and most intelligent opposition;<sup>1</sup> while the county of Providence, embracing the outlying towns,<sup>2</sup> was completely under the influence of the delusion. The case of *Trevett vs. Weeden*<sup>3</sup> was decided in the Superior Court, September 26, 1786.<sup>4</sup> On the 17th of October, a committee of which Mr. Foster was a member, presented to the town of Providence a carefully considered and thoroughly intelligent report,<sup>5</sup> covering the ground very fully.<sup>6</sup> In this same month the General Assembly, having reached the highest conceivable point of folly in citing the judges who had rendered the *Trevett vs. Weeden* decision "to give their immediate attendance on this Assembly to assign the reasons and grounds of the aforesaid judgment,"<sup>7</sup> abandoned its worse than childish meddling with the matter. The law making the paper money a legal tender was not, however, repealed until 1789.<sup>8</sup>

Mr. Foster's manuscript collections contain<sup>9</sup> documents bearing upon this discussion and also upon the agitation in

(1) Staples's "Annals," p. 294-320; Arnold's "Rhode Island," II. 517, 520, 539, 543, 545-50.

(2) Staples's "Annals," p. 301, 319.

(3) The proceedings in this well-known case were separately published, ("The case, *Trevett against Weeden*," Providence, 1787).

(4) See also Arnold's "Rhode Island," II. 525; and Updike's "Memoirs of the Rhode Island bar," p. 166-207.

(5) Printed in Staples's "Annals," p. 306-11.

(6) This had been preceded in February of the same year by a memorial from citizens of Providence to the General Assembly, in which they ventured to "entertain too high an opinion of the good sense and virtue of the substantial farmers in the country, to believe that they can listen to the suggestions of a wily, selfish, policy, or aim to build themselves up, at the expense of sacrificing the seaport towns and the commerce of the state." (Staples's "Annals," p. 301). The event proved that this good opinion was indeed "too high."

(7) R. I. Col. Records, X. 215. Compare also Potter's "Bills of credit," p. 125-29.

(8) R. I. Col. Records, X. 355.

(9) Foster Papers, III. 42. See also his correspondence.



favor of the United States constitution, showing that his influence must have been an effective one on the right side, in both these questions. The latter question was fast becoming a living issue.<sup>1</sup> The call for the convention at Philadelphia in May, 1787, was now under consideration throughout the American colonies.<sup>2</sup> The Rhode Island General Assembly in March refused by a large majority to send delegates.<sup>3</sup> In May, 1787, the resignation of Mr. Waterman, one of the members of the governor's council of assistants, left a vacancy which was filled by the appointment of Mr. Foster.<sup>4</sup> He was doubtless put forward in order to strengthen the now conspicuously small element in the state government, who could be depended on for an advocacy of the constitution. John Brown and Benjamin Bourne of Providence, Henry Marchant of Newport and William Bradford of Bristol, were the most eminent members of the General Assembly who acted with him. In the face of the expression of public sentiment in Providence and Newport, the General Assembly refused to act,<sup>5</sup> and Rhode Island attained the unenviable distinction of being the only state unrepresented in the signing of the constitution in September.

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(1) The matter is very fully treated, with ample reference to illustrative documents, in Staples's "Rhode Island in the Continental Congress."

(2) A letter of Mr. Varnum and Mr. Arnold, delegates of Rhode Island in congress, bringing the subject of the convention to the notice of Gov. Collins, (April 24, 1787), is printed in R. I. Col. Records, X. 246-47.

(3) Staples's "Annals," p. 320.

(4) R. I. Col. Records, X. 242.

(5) There is a very spirited protest of the Newport and Providence deputies, against the draught of a letter from the governor to congress, dated September 15, 1787. The remonstrants say with reference to the "proposed convention:" "As it would have been our highest honor and interest to have complied with the tender invitations of our sister states, and of congress, so our non-compliance hath been our highest imprudence; and therefore it would have been more consistent with our honor and dignity to have lamented our mistake and decently apologized for our errors, than to have endeavored to support them on ill-founded reasons and indefensible principles." (R. I. Col. Records, X. 260).

Mr. Foster has left on record expressions which leave no doubt of his own position in relation to this question.<sup>1</sup> Both by nature and training he was inclined to favor an effective method of constitutional government. Moreover, his father, Judge Foster, had died in 1779, while serving as a member of the special committee<sup>2</sup> of the Massachusetts Constitutional convention, appointed to draught a state constitution. His brother, Dwight Foster, associated with him for nearly ten years in the study and practice of legal and constitutional matters at Providence,<sup>3</sup> immediately took his father's place in the Massachusetts convention,<sup>4</sup> and was not only an active supporter of the state constitution then adopted, but of the United States constitution, nine years later. Yet it is noteworthy that Theodore Foster's attitude in connection with the question of Rhode Island's adoption of the constitution, placed him in antagonism with his father-in-law, and intimate associate, Arthur Fenner, who was regarded as among its most strenuous opponents.<sup>5</sup>

One of the strongest of the arguments brought to bear on the General Assembly is found in a petition by a committee of the town of Providence, dated March 26, 1788, to which Mr. Foster's name is signed.<sup>6</sup> "If a convention be not held," it argues, "at a period when the proceedings of this state might have an influence on the federal councils, and the doings of other states, one must sooner or later be held, to join in the general American confederacy, after having lost all opportunity of influencing or having any direction in the formation of that confederacy."<sup>7</sup>

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(1) Foster Papers, III. 42. Compare also the letter of Theodore Sedgwick to Theodore Foster, April 26, 1790. (Foster Correspondence, I. 24). Also Staples's "Rhode Island in the Continental Congress," p. 626-27.

(2) See the "Journal of the (Massachusetts) convention for framing a new constitution, 1783," p. 45. Also, Whiting's "Bi-centennial oration at Brookfield, Mass.," p. 59.

(3) 1770 to 1779. Dwight genealogy, II. 653.

(4) Ibid., II. 653.

(5) Vinton's "Oration on the annals of Rhode Island," p. 28-29, 32-33, 38.

(6) Staples's "Annals," p. 322-27. Draught of same in Foster Papers, III. 42.

(7) Staples's "Annals," p. 327.

The 4th of March, 1789, was the day on which the government of the United States under its present constitution was to go into operation at New York. In May, the Rhode Island General Assembly closed its session at Newport, not with the customary formula of "God save the United States of America," but with that of "God save the state."<sup>1</sup> On the 27th of August a petition to Congress was drawn up by a committee of the town of Providence, to which Mr. Foster's name is signed, which aimed to set the action of this community in its just relation to that of the state at large. "This town," it declares,<sup>2</sup> "pleased with the spirit of liberty, tempered with energy and responsibility, which so strikingly pervades the new constitution, made the most unremitted exertions for obtaining a convention of the state for its adoption." On the 29th of May, 1790, the reluctant accession of Rhode Island to the union was finally obtained;<sup>3</sup> the General Assembly was once more prorogued with the formula, "God save the United States of America,"<sup>4</sup> and immediate action was taken for making such appointments and elections<sup>5</sup> as were rendered necessary by the new relation of Rhode Island to the nation. It is not surprising that one of the first steps taken was to elect as senators in congress Joseph Stanton, Jr., of Charlestown, and Theodore Foster, of Providence.<sup>6</sup>

Senator Foster entered congress as a constant and hearty supporter of Washington and Hamilton. Party lines had not yet been definitely drawn between "Federalist" and "Republican," but it was inevitable that when they should be drawn, he would be found acting with the Federalists. He took his seat in the Senate, June 25, 1790.<sup>7</sup> Very little was acted

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(1) R. I. Col. Records, X. 331.

(2) Staples's "Annals," p. 341.

(3) Staples's "Rhode Island in the Continental Congress," p. 626.

(4) R. I. Col. Records, X. 387.

(5) Ibid., X. 387, 388.

(6) Ibid., X. 387.

(7) "Annals of congress," 1st cong., I. 993. It is worthy of note, that during Mr. Foster's service in congress from Rhode Island, his brother repre-

on in congress during the next two months, beyond the selection of a permanent seat of government. Mr. Foster's vote was at first cast in favor of Baltimore.<sup>1</sup> Washington was however finally selected by an unanimous vote as the site of the future federal city. Congress was adjourned Aug. 12, 1790, and on his return to Providence Senator Foster had the pleasure of bringing with him President Washington, for his first official visit to that stubborn state which had so long stood out alone. "A federal salute," says Staples,<sup>2</sup> "accompanied by the joyful ringing of bells," announced the arrival of the packet (specially engaged for the presidential party), at the wharf. Governor Fenner, the senator's father-in-law, extended the hospitalities of the state; and the unmistakable enthusiasm with which the president was received, was an interesting indication, to quote from Mr. Hildreth,<sup>3</sup> that "all the states of the original confederacy" were now "again reunited, by their own free consent, under the federal constitution."

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sented Massachusetts, and a kinsman represented New Hampshire, though not in the same branch of the government. Hon. Abiel Foster was chosen one of the original members of the House, from New Hampshire, in 1789, serving from 1789 to 1791, and from 1795 to 1803. Hon. Dwight Foster served as a member of the House, from Massachusetts, from 1793 to 1799, when he succeeded Hon. Samuel Dexter, as United States senator from Massachusetts, serving until 1803. Thus the two brothers were in the senate together, from 1800 to 1803. See note 8, page 113.

Theodore Foster resigned the position of "Naval officer" of Providence, in order to accept that of United States senator. It is uncertain how long he had held the former position. Compare, however, Stone's "John Howland," p. 166. Also *Providence Gazette*, September 26, 1789.

(1) A letter from the two senators, to the governor of the state, February 17, 1791, in the R. I. Col. Records, X. 422-26.

(2) Staples's "Annals," p. 353-56. The Golden Ball Inn, (now the Mansion House), was the house occupied by the presidential party, which included Thomas Jefferson, secretary of state, and Gov. Clinton, of New York. The visit extended from August 17 to August 19, and on the evening of the 17th, to quote from the *Providence Gazette* of Aug. 21, 1790, the visitors were honored with the decoration of "the college green," and the illumination of the building by the students, "which," says the *Gazette*, "made a most splendid appearance."

(3) Hildreth's "History of the United States," IV. 210.

The period of service upon which Senator Foster had now entered was destined to be one of the longest in the record of Rhode Island senators,<sup>1</sup> embracing two successive reëlections and covering thirteen years. During this period, three different presidents filled the chair, and he himself had four successive colleagues.<sup>2</sup> There is of course no space for enumerating here all the matters of legislation with which he was connected. It may, however, be said that he served on the committee on "establishing a post-office,"<sup>3</sup> on private debts due the government,<sup>4</sup> on the regulation of the militia establishment;<sup>5</sup> on the revision of militia laws;<sup>6</sup> and on the collection of customs.<sup>7</sup> His votes were uniformly recorded for those financial measures by which the first secretary of the treasury, to use Webster's very effective metaphor, "touched the dead corpse of the public credit, and it sprung upon its feet."<sup>8</sup> The question of apportionment was a peculiarly perplexing one during the first two years, and Mr. Foster's votes show very naturally an anxiety not to compromise the interests of his own state, small in size as it was. The inevitable question of neutrality was forced on congress, in 1793, by the proceedings of the revolutionary party in France.<sup>9</sup> Senator Foster, in one of his letters<sup>10</sup> to his constant correspondent, Dr. Drowne, speaks of a conversation which he had just had with Alexander Hamilton, in which the secretary had expressed his solicitude, as to the

(1) It is surpassed by only three others, including that of the late senior senator from Rhode Island, Hon. Henry B. Anthony; whose period of service, in fact, had he completed the term on which he last entered, would have been unsurpassed by that of any other senator whatever.

(2) Joseph Stanton, Jr.; William Bradford; Ray Greene; and Christopher Ellery.

(3) April 7, 1794. "Annals of congress," 3d congress, p. 81.

(4) February 18, 1795. "Annals of congress," 3d congress, p. 827.

(5) February 18, 1795. "Annals of congress," 3d congress, p. 828.

(6) May 29, 1797. "Annals of congress," 5th congress, I. 16.

(7) July 20, 1790. "Annals of congress," 1st congress, I. 1015; compare also 7th congress, 2d session, p. 91.

(8) Webster's "Works," I. 200.

(9) "Annals of congress," 3d congress, p. 32, 67, 70, 87.

(10) April 8, 1794.



issue, hoping "that the country may escape being involved in the war."

Events<sup>1</sup> were fast crystallizing the opposing elements in congress, into definitely organized political parties, in avowed opposition to each other. It is perhaps impossible to reproduce for ourselves any conception of the partisan bitterness which was successively occasioned by the nomination<sup>2</sup> of Mr. Jay as minister to England, by his confirmation after a close struggle,<sup>3</sup> and by the disclosure<sup>4</sup> of the treaty which he had negotiated. The treaty was finally confirmed, and received the signature of President Washington. It is a significant indication of the state of feeling at this time, that this action by the man who was "first in the hearts of his countrymen" exposed him to attacks upon his motives, of the most malicious nature.<sup>5</sup> The position of the Federalist party was, at this time, and for some years to come, a strikingly patriotic one. In the face of a popular and turbulent opposition, it steadfastly urged those measures which appeared to be the essential and vital ones. The strength of the Federalist party in Rhode Island is not a little singular when one considers how recently the hottest opposition<sup>6</sup> to all the foundation principles of this party had kept this state outside the union. Even the wild indignation aroused by the

(1) One event which very noticeably hastened this tendency was the issue by Great Britain, in November, 1793, of the well-known "Order in council," relative to neutral vessels. (Hildreth's *United States*," IV. 486).

(2) April 16, 1794. (Washington's "Writings," X. 404).

(3) April 19, 1794. (Hildreth's "United States," IV. 488).

(4) June 29, 1795. (Hildreth's "United States," IV. 547). (Schoaler's "United States," I. 294-95).

(5) It was at this time that Washington was led to declare that he "would rather be in his grave than in the presidency."

(6) As pointed out elsewhere by the present editor, (Foster's "Stephen Hopkins," II. 154), "it would almost seem as if the opposing forces had worn themselves out in the contest; for it is a very significant fact that, from this time [1790] on, so long as there was any active federalist party, Rhode Island was a federalist state."



negotiation of Jay's treaty with Great Britain did not succeed in shaking its soundness in this regard.<sup>1</sup>

Jay's treaty, however, was a very serious matter; and thus early in the history of the government, was the occasion of putting its endurance to a severe strain. It can hardly be wondered at that there was dissatisfaction with it. "England," says a recent writer, "was still at liberty to impress American seamen, to harass American commerce, and to shut it out from the West India trade."<sup>2</sup> Yet those who with Washington, felt that it must be sustained, while regretting its inadequacy, were well assured that far worse consequences would follow its rejection. There are few more impressive instances of deliberative oratory on record, than the justly celebrated speech of Fisher Ames, on the question of ratifying the treaty.<sup>3</sup> Senator Foster, writing to his friend, Dr. Drowne, Jan. 22, 1796, remarked:

"The treaty with the British is strongly threatened with a severe attack in the House of Representatives. Should a vote be obtained, disapproving it, \* \* \* probably the final result would be a war with Great Britain."

Most of the Federalists at this time were favorable, on the whole, to Mr. Adams, as a successor to President Washington, who now insisted on retiring permanently from public life. Senator Foster, writing Dec. 18, 1796, to Dr. Drowne, declares with evident satisfaction: "I congratulate you on the election of Mr. Adams. There is a prospect of our country being respectable and happy, under his administration." Un-

(1) Fisher Ames, who spent several days in Rhode Island in the early autumn of 1795, wrote as follows to his friend, Oliver Wolcott, Secretary of the Treasury: "At Providence the anti-federal party is very inconsiderable, and I was happy to see in that state (Rhode Island) symptoms of a just pride in their present state." "I made conversation at all the country taverns, and I think the yeomanry are yet right." (Printed in Wolcott's "Memoirs of the administrations of Washington and John Adams," I. 229).

(2) Johnston's "History of American politics," p. 35.

(3) April 28, 1796. (Printed in the "Works" of Fisher Ames, II. 37-71; Benton's "Abridgment of debates," I. 743-48).

fortunately, this prospect was soon clouded; and the succeeding four years witnessed the most serious misunderstandings and entanglements in the conduct of home affairs.

The ten years of Senator Foster's stay in Philadelphia<sup>1</sup> were full of interest to him. It was at that time the chief city of the country, and in his correspondence will be found frequent references to the life of the city at that period, and to the eminent men in its society.<sup>2</sup> Memoranda are occasionally found, also, of the additions made to his private library, from the bookstores of that city; to his attendance on public lectures and addresses;<sup>3</sup> and to occasional dramatic performances.<sup>4</sup> During the year 1796, as appears in one of his letters to Dr. Drowne, he took up his residence in a French family, for the purpose as he says, "of making greater proficiency in the French language," which he had already studied in college and by himself. A familiar acquaintance with the officers among the French allies<sup>5</sup> during the war had also been of service. He farther says, in the letter just cited: "I find it of great

(1) The sessions of congress were held at Philadelphia from December 6, 1790, until the year 1800. In November of the latter year the seat of government was removed to the city of Washington. Philadelphia had in 1800 a population of 69,403. ("Compendium of 7th U. S. census," p. 192).

(2) May 13, 1796, he writes of being at Dr. Shippen's, whose well preserved mansion still stands, near Fairmount Park. June 29, 1797, he speaks not only of dining with President Adams, within a few days, but also at Dr. Casper Wistar's. The receptions at Dr. Wistar's soon afterwards developed into a somewhat permanent institution. Watson, in his "Annals of Philadelphia and Pennsylvania," (II. 497), remarks: "These evening parties, for which Philadelphia society is remarkable, were begun by Dr. Casper Wistar in 1799, by his call of all the members of the Philosophical Society to his house, once a week, during the winter."

(3) December 18, 1796, he writes of having listened that day to Dr. Benjamin Rush's eulogium on Dr. Rittenhouse, late president of the American Philosophical Society.

(4) April 5, 1798, he writes of having attended a performance of Shakespeare's "King Lear."

(5) Among those with whom he had a familiar acquaintance was Lafayette, as appears from Stone's "Our French allies," p. 30. In the assignment of officers' quarters in 1780, Major de B  ville was his guest; and in 1778 the Marquis de Fleury. (Stone's "Our French allies," p. 321, 35-36).

advantage to me. I have now a considerable acquaintance among the French in this city." Possibly it was his proficiency in this connection which caused him to be appointed,<sup>1</sup> Dec. 19, 1800, on a committee "to prepare a translation of so much of the journal of the late envoys extraordinary and ministers plenipotentiary, of the United States, to the French republic, as is communicated in the French language." It does not appear that his connection with his French friends, or his wide acquaintance among them, in any way warped his judgment in the Gallic infatuation of 1796.<sup>2</sup>

In 1797, so threatening was the aspect of affairs that an extra session of congress was called. May 18, 1797, Mr. Foster writes from his seat in the senate: "I think an envoy extraordinary will be appointed to France,—more perhaps because one was sent to England than for any good reason besides." Of the president's foreign policy he writes, a few weeks later: <sup>3</sup>—"His policy is firm, steady, and right forward; the Jeffersonian policy more compliant to the views of France."<sup>4</sup> In the interval between the adjournment of this session of congress and the re-assembling of that body in November, events in France had forced Pinckney, the American minister, to his determined declaration:—"Millions for defence, not one cent for tribute."<sup>5</sup> Senator Foster, writing, April 27,

(1) Annals of congress. 7th congress, p. 767.

(2) June 29, 1797, Senator Foster writes of a toast being given by Thomas Jefferson, in these words: "General Buonaparte; he seems to be one of our best friends;" and mentions the fact in a by no means approving tone.

(3) June 29, 1797.

(4) In this same letter Senator Foster objects to Mr. Jefferson's policy as being "less determined in support of so strict a neutrality as the late President Washington undertook to establish." The principles of Washington's "Farewell address" (delivered scarcely a year before this), in warning against foreign entanglements, were still fresh in mind.

There is a letter of Senator Foster to John Howland, dated April 16, 1798, in which he refers to the "threatening storm" resulting from the foreign relations of the country. (Printed in Stone's "John Howland," p. 168-69).

(5) Bradford's "History of federal government," p. 96.

1798, to Dr. Drowne, said : "The dispatches from our envoys to France too plainly indicate what is coming." "We have once contended successfully against one nation, for our independence. We must not give it up to another, when we have done so much to obtain and establish it."

The remainder of President Adams's administration is little more than a record of mistakes, misunderstandings, and almost inexcusable blunders on the part of all parties. In June, 1798, the "alien law" and the almost equally ill-considered "sedition law" came up for their final action, and were passed in the senate by the full vote of the New England Federalists, (Senator Foster included). Congress adjourned in July, after animated discussion on the question of raising an army, and the appointment of a commander-in-chief; and after the president had announced that there was now an end to negotiations with the French republic. In the months which followed the adjournment of congress, a deep-seated feeling of resentment and indignation began to manifest itself throughout the country, particularly in the strongly Republican districts; and culminated late in this year and in the beginning of the next, in the passage of the momentous Virginia and Kentucky resolutions. In February, 1799, President Adams took the step which has been variously characterized as the most praiseworthy and the most blameworthy of his career, the nomination of three envoys to France. The envoys were successful in their mission, but from this time onward the break between the president and the majority of the Federalist party was an irremediable one.

When in 1800 the time drew near for the selection of presidential candidates, the Federalist leaders found themselves in a most perplexing situation. On the one hand, the candidate most prominently urged was Thomas Jefferson,—a man who stood in their minds for the most objectionable of political principles, and in whom they had no confidence. On the other was John Adams,—a man who had gradually but very completely alienated their confidence by his course since 1797. The outcome of their action is well known. The result of

the election being indecisive, they found the decision of the case referred to the House of Representatives, under the then provisions of the constitution. The three months of uncertainty and excitement which followed, closed with the declaration of Mr. Jefferson's election, Feb. 17, 1801. A letter written by Senator Foster at almost the very time of declaring the vote bears witness to the "high political fever" which prevailed.

The support of Aaron Burr by the New England Federalists is one of the least creditable acts in the early political history of the country. The time which has elapsed since its occurrence has by no means served to diminish the regret with which it must be viewed. "The Federalists," says Mr. Charles Francis Adams, "being mostly from the Northern States, sympathized the more with Burr for that very reason. Parties rarely spend the time in refining." "Thus it happened that the Federal members took a course, success in which would have proved a misfortune, and wherein failure sunk them forever in the public esteem."<sup>1</sup>

In November, 1800, Senator Foster's younger brother, Dwight, who from 1793 to 1799 had been a member of the national House of Representatives, entered the upper house as one of the senators from Massachusetts. For nearly three years, the two brothers sat together in the senate. Dwight resigned his seat before the expiration of his term, and retired at the same time with his brother, in March, 1803. An examination of the record of debates and votes shows an interesting divergence of action on the part of the two brothers, who seem oftener to have divided than to have acted together, on questions of minor importance. Dwight's retirement from national politics was but the beginning of a long and useful career in his own state of Massachusetts.<sup>2</sup> With Theodore, however, his

(1) C. F. Adams's "Life of John Adams," (ed. 1856), p. 595, (published as v. 1 of Adams's "Works"). Compare also some interesting contemporary letters, printed in G. C. Mason's "Reminiscences of Newport," p. 108-15.

(2) He was a judge of the Worcester county court of common pleas, (1801-11); a member of Governor Brooks's council, 1818; and from 1811 until the



return to Providence was the beginning of an almost total withdrawal from public life.

Senator Foster, in closing his thirteen years' term of senatorial service,—one of the longest on record,—appears to have done so not merely with willingness, but with a feeling, as indicated by his letters, which amounted almost to eagerness. The language of these letters strikingly recalls, in fact, the similar feeling of Rufus Choate, already mentioned,<sup>1</sup> who like him, many years later, sat as a senator in this very body, and like him, retired with intense satisfaction to resume his studies and home occupations.

Mr. Choate "had been," says one of his biographers,<sup>2</sup> "a senator in congress, but as he grew old he disliked everything

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end of his life, (1823), one of the most eminent members of the Massachusetts bar.

His grandson, Dwight Foster, was in 1866 appointed one of the judges of the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court. He served in 1877 as the agent of the United States in the proceedings of the Halifax fishery commission. ("Documents and proceedings of the Halifax commission, 1877," Washington, 1878, I. 6-10, 12).

He died at his home in Boston, April 18 of the present year, (1884). Judge Foster was from 1856 to 1863, and again from 1880 to his death, a member of the executive council of the American Antiquarian Society. At the semi-annual meeting of that society, April 21, 1884, a minute in relation to his death was adopted. In his character as a Supreme Court judge, remarks this minute, "he was eminent among distinguished associates;" and it farther says: "In the attention now devoted to heredity, it will be noticed the great-grandfather and the grandfather of our associate, Hon. Jedediah Foster and Hon. Dwight Foster, were judges and respected legal authorities in their time, and his father, Hon. Alfred Dwight Foster, was a well-read lawyer, though he did not practice." (Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society, April 21, 1884, p. 94-95). Judge Foster was also an accomplished historical investigator, and the report of the council, ("Proceedings," above cited, p. 111), dwells with exceptional emphasis on the loss to the society sustained by his death.

(1) See page 111.

(2) Edwin P. Whipple, in "Some recollections of Rufus Choate," p. 30. Compare Senator Foster's letters to Dr. Drowne. Compare also quotations from some of them, in a "History of Rhode Island," (published 1878), p. 153-34. His "literary tastes," as quoted in Dwight's genealogy, "personal friendships, and love of nature, were far dearer to him



in politics which drew him away from his library during the brief hours of leisure which his professional engagements enabled him to enjoy."

Together with his life-long friend, Dr. Drowne, Senator Foster withdrew at once from public life to his estate at Foster, R. I., the town which had been named in honor of him in 1781.<sup>1</sup> The two friends found here abundant scope for the gratification of their literary and classical predilections. Both of them had passed the age of fifty; both had been in college together; both had been companions in delightful studies and in youthful recreations; both had been most assiduous correspondents through the years which had since elapsed, during which Dr. Drowne had served as a surgeon in the war of the revolution, studied medicine at London, Paris and Amsterdam, and aided in planting the infant settlement on the Ohio. At this sightly and healthful location, to which they gave the name of Mount Hygeia, they took up their abode with their families, "surrounded," says a recent writer,<sup>2</sup> "by such comforts as the time and their means afforded. They communed together, as in their boyhood they had planned, writing verses full of classical allusions, as was the fashion of the age, and engaging in their favorite studies." Yet, "while enjoying their 'learned leisure,' they found time to advance the interests of the town." Senator Foster was chiefly instrumental in the establishment of a post-office, a bank, and a library,—the latter being contrib-

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than pecuniary gain." It is probable that he was somewhat too indifferent to the accumulation of property.

(1) His second marriage (to Miss Esther Bowen Millard), occurred a few months after his return from Philadelphia, (June 18, 1803). She died December 29, 1815, aged thirty; and the last thirteen years of his life were passed chiefly at Providence with his daughter, Mrs. Tillinghast, whose husband, Stephen Tillinghast, was a grandson of his old friend, Stephen Hopkins, and was named for him. It is of interest to notice that while Senator Theodore Foster's daughter thus married a descendant of one signer of the Declaration of Independence, (Stephen Hopkins), Senator Dwight Foster's grandson, (the late Judge Dwight Foster, of Boston), married a descendant of another of the signers, (Roger Sherman). (Dwight Genealogy, II. 636, 656).

(2) Mr. Robert Grieve, in "Picturesque Rhode Island," p. 165.

uted almost wholly by him, and presented to the town.<sup>1</sup> He also interested himself in the very marked reconstruction and improvement of the main road from Providence to Woodstock and Hartford. That "portion of the road," says the writer just quoted, which passed through Senator Foster's farm "was made of great width, and was named by him the 'Appian Way.'"

The closing years of Senator Foster's life, from 1803 to 1828, were also devoted very largely to a continuation of those historical studies and researches, begun early in life under the influence of Governor Hopkins's suggestions and coöperation, and interrupted by his long term of public service. He became, in fact, the most assiduous antiquarian within the limits of the state. Not only at his own home did he prosecute these researches into the early history of the colony, but to him is due the credit of the preservation of much that would inevitably, but for his exertions, have perished. It was his practice, on hearing of an historical document of interest and value, at Newport, at Boston, at Cambridge, or at New Haven, to visit the place where it could be seen, and either secure it for his collection, or else preserve a copy of it. It will probably never be known how largely subsequent investigators are under obligations to him in this regard. In his long contemplated project of a history of the state, he was by no means so successful. He did something towards grouping his material, and made a beginning in the construction of a part of the history, but left it uncompleted. His essential service, however, was that of a collector of material. He died Jan. 13, 1828.<sup>2</sup>

(1) A list of some of the books presented by him to that library, neatly printed on one side of a sheet, is in the possession of Rev. Dr. Thomas Stafford Drowne, of Garden City, Long Island.

(2) It is somewhat singular that there is not at present a single one of his descendants, bearing the name of the family, in Providence. Of the descendants of Senator Foster through his daughter, Mrs. Tillinghast, (descendants of Governor Hopkins as well), no less than six have been graduated at Brown University,—one of them, Theodore Foster Tillinghast, being a member of the class of 1884.

Senator Foster, while by no means distinguished among the public men of his time, was in many respects a most useful man. His early life was perhaps the most interesting and striking, from a political point of view, offering as it did, admirable opportunities for the signal services which he rendered, during the revolution; in connection with the protests of the town of Providence against the paper money measures; and in the adoption of the United States constitution. His congressional life, though comprising not a few instances of valuable and thoughtful service, was not what would be looked for in a man of a decided bent for public life,<sup>1</sup> and he apparently never showed any indications of pronounced statesmanship. His closing years were among the most useful of his life, and his labors in the collection and preservation of historical material and his agency in the organization of the Rhode Island Historical Society,<sup>2</sup> will cause his name to be long remembered by his grateful successors in the same field of research.<sup>3</sup>

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(1) Indeed it would appear that his father, Judge Foster, dying at the age of fifty-four, gave promise of attaining greater eminence in public life, had his life been spared, than either of his two sons, Theodore and Dwight.

(2) He was one of its earliest members and first officers. In October, 1800, while still in the senate, Senator Foster was elected a corresponding member of the Massachusetts Historical Society, on the nomination of Rev. Dr. James Freeman, the minister of King's Chapel. ("Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society," I. 134-35). With Thomas Wallcut, the first recording secretary of that society, he carried on a correspondence in relation to the writings of Roger Williams. There is an extract from a letter of Senator Foster to Rev. Dr. John Eliot, December 29, 1800, printed in the "Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society," I. 133, in which he speaks of his undertaking the preparation of the history of Rhode Island, earlier begun by Governor Hopkins.

(3) The foregoing brief memoir has been appended to these original papers on early Rhode Island history, with a view to furnishing some opportunity to judge of their writer's facilities for making these collections.

A similar sketch of Governor Hopkins might with equal propriety have been added, were it not that this ground has been traversed by the present editor, in the publication (1884) of "Stephen Hopkins, a Rhode Island statesman." By William E. Foster. (R. I. Historical Tracts, No. 19).

# THE NARRAGANSETTS.

BY HENRY C. DORR.



## THE NARRAGANSETTS.

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All the burdens of Rhode Island, while her people were few and poor, were light, when compared with those she endured from the Narragansetts. Danger was ever present. Indian disquiets intruded themselves everywhere, and often superseded all other topics. They were at the Town Meeting, and the Town Mill, at the wedding feast and the Militia training, and were especially alarming to the household, when the head of the family was away from home. If the topics of Williams's letters bore any proportion to the ordinary employment of his thoughts, we may believe that nearly half of his lifetime wore away, not in the promotion of intellectual or moral good, but in giving a safe direction to Indian politics. These had but one advantage. They were better than the sectarian quarrels which they did so much to prevent or to exclude. The annoying and demoralising presence of the Indians was ever near. A generation passed away, with no abatement of the evil, but only with the prospect of its ending in a bloody collision, in the not distant future.

That we may rightly estimate the Narragansetts, and the feelings of the settlers towards them, let us endeavour to see them as the founders saw them—not as antiquaries or as linguists, but in the cold light of every-day life. Our settlers were not, like the founders of Boston, occupiers of a territory whose former inhabitants had been wasted away by pestilence, until their force was nearly gone. The planters of Mooshassuc were from the first, confronted with a tribe whose strength was unbroken, and whose numbers were many fold superior to their own. The situation proposed only the question how, in the



midst of poverty and isolation, to devise measures of public safety and peace.

But one of the founders of Rhode Island felt any interest in the origin and history of the Narragansetts. The Indians wondered that any one cared for what was of so little interest to themselves, and should be so curious about them.

"They say themselves, that they have sprung and growne up in that very place, like the very trees of the wilderness."<sup>1</sup> But in spite of the trivial aid which he received from any quarter, Williams persevered until he had mastered "the barbarous rockie speech" of the Narragansetts. We are supplied with ample materials for our judgment of them, from the writings of Williams alone. He saw and carefully studied them before they had become corrupted by the trade and the "strong waters" of the English, or had added anything to their own native virtues or vices. He came among the Narragansetts, not as an explorer or an archæologist, but as a missionary of more than ordinary hopefulness and enthusiasm, believing that many of them were ready to welcome Christianity and civilisation.<sup>2</sup>

He therefore sought eagerly for all their better traits of character, which he has noted in his "Key" to their language. By this book, they have been estimated in subsequent generations. The letters of Williams, written during many earlier and later years, exhibit his judgment as modified by experience and by disappointment. It becomes far less favourable as years go on, and by it we are enabled to appreciate the early difficulties and dangers of his Plantation.

Topics more grave and urgent than Indian antiquities<sup>3</sup> engrossed the attention of Williams. He either made few enquiries respecting them, or learned little which he deemed

(1) Roger Williams's "Key into the language of America," p. 19. The references to Williams's "Key," are to the edition of 1827, published by the R. I. Historical Society, Vol. I of its Collections.

(2) Key, pp. 18, 21, 22, 24, 40.

(3) Key, p. 161. The Indians disliked the mention of their dead, or any enquiries about them. Williams doubtless respected their prejudices, and hence their traditions and history have been lost.

worthy of preservation. He has sketched from his own view, a vigorous outline of the last generation of the Narragansetts, which had a national life. Little more is needed in a view of their relations with the race which has supplanted them.

The Biblical studies of the founders of New England awakened a lively interest in the origin of the strange people with whom they had formed an unwilling acquaintance. Some in Europe and America were reluctant to admit that a race whose barbaric manners were at every point in contrast with their own, could have a common ancestry with themselves. In the seventeenth century, the opinion was widely diffused that the American Indians were by natural descent and generation, children of the devil. Some of the theologians who were unaware of the existence of the Straits of Behring, and who imagined that the shortest route from Asia was by the way of Cape Horn, found it difficult to explain to their own satisfaction, how, without such a parentage, thousands of barbarians could have found their way across the Pacific, and have been diffused over the American Continent. The earliest historian of Massachusetts, Hubbard, adopted a more moderate hypothesis.<sup>1</sup> Referring with approval to the learned Joseph Mede, he was of opinion that at some remote and undiscoverable period, the devil finding the old world no longer suited to his operations, "seduced a company of silly wretches" for his own abominable and "diabolical service," into a wilderness where they practice their diabolic rites without hindrance or obstruction.<sup>2</sup> This opinion "carries the greatest probability of truth with it."<sup>3</sup>

(1) Hubbard, "General history of New England," chap. 6.

(2) In an equally enlightened spirit, Hubbard, chap. 7, thought that the religion and manners of the Indians were mere diabolism, and unworthy of Christian enquiry. To the like effect see Johnson's "Wonder-working Providence," 2d series, Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., VIII. 28-29. So, Winslow, 2d series, IX. 94. "The pnieses are men of great courage and wisdom, and to these also the devil appeareth more familiarly than to others, and as we conceive maketh covenant with them to preserve them from death," etc. See Upham's "Salem Witchcraft," I. 396, *et subs.* for other citations.

(3) 2d series, Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., V. 26. •

Neither Williams nor Eliot entertained such inhuman fancies. They believed that the Indians of New England as partakers in their common humanity, were entitled to their kindly regard. Since their day, little has been added to our knowledge of the origin of the Indian tribes. A better study of the Asiatic nations confirms the old opinion that the primitive American races were the offshoots or emigrants from some of them. Their physiognomy—their barbarous trophies,<sup>1</sup> the hanging up of the hands and heads of enemies—their lunar months,<sup>2</sup> their holding tribes and families, subject to vengeance for the acts and crimes of their members<sup>3</sup>—their habits of long protracted mourning—were but some of their inheritances from Central Asia, in an early period of the world. In the present state of ethnological science, we may be content to leave the subject where Williams left it, and to conclude with him<sup>4</sup> that “their originall and descent” are from Adam and Noah, “but for their later descent and whence they came into those parts, it seems as hard to finde, as to finde the well head of some fresh streame, which running many miles out of the countrey to the salt ocean, hath met with many mixing streames by the way.”

In recent years, there have been attempts to estimate the period of their sojourn upon American soil. Those who have last engaged in such enquiries have met with little better success than their predecessors. The Indians of New England left no historical monuments and had no ancient traditions which indicated an abode of many centuries upon the Atlantic seaboard.<sup>5</sup> The facts upon which modern conjectures (we can

(1)Key, p. 60.

(2)Key, pp. 69-70.

(3)Key, pp. 45, 76. In case of robbery, justice was sought from the nation of the offender. Gen. Gookin says—he wrote in 1674—all the family are concerned to revenge robbery or murder, unless satisfied by a payment of wampumpeage. 1st series, Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll. I. 149.

(4)Key, p. 19.

(5)Key, p. 19. Their isolation had been so long continued that they had lost all traditions of any other races of mankind. They knew nothing of any other people but themselves.

scarcely call them inferences) have been founded, are themselves uncertain. We are still doubtful whether the Narragansetts were in the seventeenth century still as powerful as their fathers, or whether they were at their first contact with Englishmen the mere remnant of a race once numerous, but now become stationary, or, under unfavourable social or sanitary conditions, slowly declining towards extinction. Their mythical legends of their origin were not peculiar to themselves. The story of the origin of Canonicus, has its counterpart in the traditions of Western tribes, and is evidently a survival not from a recent generation, but from centuries long gone by. Their barbaric pride of race admitted no equality or kindred with other nations. It distinguished them most signally from all the African tribes, and has ever been the chief obstacle to their civilisation. It was evidently an inheritance from a conquering ancestry.

A far more practical question for the first settlers of New-England respected the numbers of the as yet unknown people with whom they had to deal. Whatever may have been their relative importance in pre-historic times, it would seem that at the arrival of the English in Massachusetts the Narragansetts were the largest and most powerful of the Indian tribes.<sup>1</sup> "The Bay people" planted themselves in a region recently depopulated (A. D. 1610-12), and then comparatively unoccupied. The Narragansetts had never been reduced by pestilence or humbled by defeat. They were a most formidable obstacle in the way of civilisation. Their numbers were never accurately known, but only estimated by men of whom some were eager for marvels, but quite unaccustomed to statistics.<sup>2</sup> These estimates may have been from traditions of an earlier time, or else fictions intended to overawe the settlers. Gen. Gookin of Massachu-

(1)Key, p. 28—"the chief people in the land." The charter of Charles II recites that the Narragansetts "are the most potent princes and people of all that country."

(2)Johnson's "Wonder-working Providence." Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., 2d series, Vol. II. Book 2, chap. 10, p. 72, says: The Mattachusets "were a populous nation consisting of 30,000 able men, now brought to lesse then 300."

(3)1st series, Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll. I. 148.

setts,<sup>1</sup> says that "the Narragansetts were reckoned, in former times, able to arm for war more than five thousand men as ancient Indians say." They never made any such display of force during their historic period.<sup>2</sup> Williams fell into no such exaggeration, but after six years' abode among them he indulged in no conjectures, and seems to have gained no certain information.<sup>3</sup> Their wandering life made an enumeration of the Narragansetts difficult. The appearance of the same families at so many separate points, led to an overestimate of their numbers. The nation was finally crushed and broken down, by the loss of not more than from one to two thousand men. After that, no one was curious as to what they once had been, until enquiry was too late. It was sufficient for the first settlers of Mooshas-sue to know that the Narragansetts were greatly their superiors in numbers and in force and that thus it was necessary to observe a kindly and cautious policy towards them.

Under such circumstances, Williams began his study of the people whom he hoped to reclaim and elevate. His first observation was, that whatever the duration of their residence, it had not developed any ability to avail themselves of the resources of their country, or even to guard themselves against the rigours of its climate. Their wigwams, even such as sheltered two families, were but small, and displayed nothing which could be called carpentry. The wigwam of a single household was "a little round house," "fourteen or sixteen foot over," and larger in proportion, for more occupants.<sup>4</sup> These structures were merely poles set up and supported by cords; stretched out in a

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(1)Gookin, p. 148. Both Plymouth and Massachusetts were depopulated about 1612-13. The Indians of Massachusetts Bay could formerly arm for war about 3000 men of whom not 300 are now left besides women and children.

(2)Gookin, p. 148.—"All do agree they were a great people."

(3)Key, p. 28. There were many villages, "it may be a dozen in 20 miles travell." The extent or population of one of these villages he does not mention.

(4)Key, p. 48.



circle and fastened to the ground. These were covered without, and lined within, with mats, bark or skins—with an aperture in the top, as a substitute for a chimney. The occupants had little constructive or inventive skill, even in the most needful arts of life. But a few of them learned the use of English tools. Their implements were of the stone age—arrowheads, hatchets, mortars to beat corn in,<sup>1</sup> and chisels—for these they had but few uses. All iron instruments were “gotten from the English.”<sup>2</sup> After some years, a few among them gained a little skill in the use of English boards and nails, and did some small work for themselves.<sup>3</sup> Here and there, one could fabricate an English chest. Their chief textile manufacture was of fishing nets of hemp.<sup>4</sup> They also made of it, baskets and bags or sacks,<sup>5</sup> some of which would hold five or six bushels of their domestic stores, and which served instead of shelves. They had also, “sedgie mats” to sleep on,<sup>6</sup> and embroidered ones made by women, for the lining of their houses. The highest mechanical skill of the men was displayed in burning out, and rudely fashioning chestnut or other timber trees, into canoes, some of them carrying three or four, and some forty men.<sup>7</sup> Their perseverance excited the admiration of Williams. A native went into the woods, with a stone hatchet, and a basket of corn, built a hut, and felled a chestnut tree. He “continues burning and hewing,” “lying there at his work alone,” “until he hath within ten or twelve dayes,” finished and “launched his boate; with which afterward hee ventures out to fish in the ocean.” “I have known thirty or forty of their canowes filled with men, and neere as many more of their enemies in a sea fight.”<sup>8</sup> These vessels were capable of

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(1)Key, pp. 50, 51.

(2)They called the English by a word which signifies “*knife-men*” and by another which signifies “*coat-men*.” Key, pp. 51, 60.

(3)Key, p. 52.

(4)Key, p. 102.

(5)Key, p. 50.

(6)Key, p. 40.

(7)Key, p. 98.

(8)Key, p. 100.



voyages to Block Island, and by their means the Narragansetts preserved their supremacy over it. Being expert swimmers they could land everywhere upon the shores. With such apparatus they were practiced codfishers. They cooked and ate the head and brains—the best parts of the bass,<sup>1</sup> and had good winter stores of many sorts of smoked and dried fish. They hung up their fish in the smoke of their wigwams. The manufacture of salt and its use in preserving fish and meats, they learned only from the English.

The chief native agricultural implement was a wooden “howe” (hoe),<sup>2</sup> its blade consisting of a huge clamshell. With the mention of this, and of their skill in making and carving of tobacco pipes, with ornamental shapes and designs, ends Williams’s enumeration of the mechanical works of the Narragansetts.

They had neither “clothes, bookes, nor letters.”<sup>3</sup> They had among them neither songs nor musical instruments,<sup>4</sup> being surpassed in this respect by the rudest African tribes. Neither their religious nor their martial emotions had any rythmical expression,—these finding utterance in incoherent shrieks, howls and outcries. Nor were there among them any, even the briefest, historical inscriptions or memorials. They had no arts<sup>5</sup> and when they first began to trade with Europeans, had no conception of money. The making of wampumpeag<sup>6</sup> had long been familiar, and by strings of it, with colours variously combined, they sent messages of friendship, or threatening,—war, or peace. It seems that the Dutch first taught the Indians to use it as an instrument of trade.<sup>7</sup> In their ignorance of the comforts of civilisation, the Indians cultivated an indifference to suffering. Both in cold and heat, they were used to sleeping in

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(1)Key, pp. 102-3.

(2)Key, p. 92.

(3)Key, pp. 20, 22, 42.

(4)Key, p. 38.

(5)Key, p. 42.

(6)See “Indian money,” by W. B. Weeden, “Johns Hopkins University Studies,” 2d series, Nos. 8-9.

(7)See Hubbard, General History. chap. 17, p. 100.

the open air,<sup>1</sup> and would readily do it, to make room for Englishmen. While fishing, during the winter, they went quite naked.<sup>2</sup> This was the costume of their children, and frequently of men and women, except a slender leathern girdle about their loins. Their coats of skins covered but little of their bodies, and were worn as ornaments, or while at leisure in cold weather. They showed the usual barbaric disesteem of cleanliness. When one of their wigwams, "those filthy smoakie, holes," had been inhabited until even a Narragansett Indian could endure its vermin no longer, the method of housecleaning was, to burn it, and build another elsewhere. Wood<sup>3</sup> says that the Indians "preferred to be naked rather than lousie." Apparently they knew no other alternative.<sup>4</sup> Their whole manner of life was in harmony with their barbarian ignorance of comfort. The Narragansetts lived during the warmer months in villages near the sea<sup>5</sup> and removed to sheltered valleys during the winter, having no ownership of the soil, or fixed places of abode. Their migratory habits, between their winter quarters and their "summer fields,"<sup>6</sup> were never fully overcome, and among the Narragansetts as among their brethren of the Northwest, were among the chief obstacles to their civilisation.

They could be taught few of the industries of the English.

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(1) "Their fire is instead of our bed cloaths." Key, pp. 38, 39.

(2) Key, pp. 104, 106.

(3) "New England's Prospect," page 73.

(4) Key, p. 58. To a similar reason may be ascribed the barbarian fondness for short hair. Gookin, p. 181. To the end of their tribal existence, they preferred wigwams. Houses were "more chargeable to build and not so warm, and cannot be removed so easily as their wigwams, wherein there is not a nail used, to avoid annoyance by fleas." The "praying Indians" were so full of fleas that Eliot could not sleep among them. During his visits to Natick, he occupied a comfortable chamber, carefully set apart, for himself. These ancient companions of the Indians adhered to them, with unwavering constancy in the lowest ebb of their fortunes. So late as January, 1707-8, Boston housekeepers declined to entertain Missionary Indians, but provided them quarters at a tavern. See Sewall's *Diary*, Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., 5th series, Vol. 6, p. 212-13.

(5) Key, p. 56.

(6) Key, p. 56.

The Indians had no fowls before the settlers came.<sup>1</sup> Nor would they keep cattle, even after they had been taught how to make cows and goats profitable for milk and butter.<sup>2</sup> Wild game was their only animal food. It was abundant, and did not diminish when hunted stealthily and noiselessly with Indian traps and bows. Deer were especially numerous.<sup>3</sup> There was, says Williams, "wonderful plenteous hunting." Sometimes "they pursue in twentie, fortie, fiftie, yea two hundred in a company (as I have scene) when they drive the woods before them." They were ingenious trappers, well knew the haunts and habits of the waterfowl and land birds, of the deer and wolf, and ready to take advantage of them.<sup>4</sup> From their wild game they derived some supplies of leather. The smoke of their wigwams served for an imperfect process of tanning, which added its pungent savours to the atmosphere of their abodes. Their mocassins, leggins and garments of deerskin they preferred to those of English cloth.<sup>5</sup> These skins of moose and deer, they painted with bright colours and used for personal ornaments, and for the warmth and decoration of their wigwams.

Their knowledge of the vegetable resources of their country was but slender.<sup>6</sup> Indian corn boiled, or parched and coarsely pulverized in a mortar, and prepared with a cookery equally simple or even rude, was their chief vegetable support. They knew nothing of the easy process of making sugar. They first learned from the English the value of many herbs which grew spontaneously around them, and whose uses, (unlike many other barbarous races) they had never felt the curiosity to test.

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(1)Key, p. 56.

(2)Key, p. 74. See Williams's letter to the Gen. Court of Mass. Narr. Club Pub., Oct. 5, 1654, VI. 276.

(3)Key, pp. 141-2.

(4)Key, pp. 85, 86, 87. Pigeons were everywhere abundant, and wild birds, devourers of the Indian corn. They caught waterfowl asleep at night by stealthy approach.

(5)Key, pp. 106, 107-8.

(6)Key, p. 33.

Tobacco was almost their only medicine and luxury.<sup>1</sup> They were not excessive in the use of it. It was the only plant upon which the men did not think it beneath their dignity to labour. The women planted, dressed, gathered, beat, and "barned" the corn,<sup>2</sup> and did all the rest of the field work.<sup>3</sup> "It is almost incredible what burthens the poore women carry of corne, of fish, of beanes, of mats, and a childe besides." The Narragansetts had but two lessons to teach to the English. One was the manuring of lands with fish,<sup>4</sup> the other was the method of baking clams with seaweed. These are the sole legacies of an ancient race, to the civilisation of the world.

As Williams became more familiar with the Narragansetts he was impressed by their active and industrious habits. They made paths through the wilderness,<sup>5</sup> acted as guides even in dangerous or hostile neighbourhoods, carried provisions for their escort, and prepared their lodgings,<sup>6</sup> and were surprisingly quick of foot.<sup>7</sup> They were keen, shrewd, suspicious, and had the ready, perceptive faculties of a rude people, who learned everything by their own experience.<sup>8</sup> The Indians<sup>9</sup> of the higher class were generally grave, and sober, yet cheerful and good humoured. These were careful to distinguish between those of their own order, and the lower and baser sort who had little self-respect, and were not even furnished with names.<sup>10</sup> Williams cheerfully accords to the Narragansetts praise for kindliness in their households, for whom their affections were exceedingly

(1) Key, pp. 35, 55.

(2) Key, pp. 50, 51.

(3) Key, p. 51.

(4) Bradford's "History of Plymouth," Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., 4th series, III. 100. Mourt's Relation, 2d series, Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., IX. 60.  
Manuring with fish, a process learned from the Indians. Savage's Winthrop, ed. 1853, I. 101.

(5) Key, p. 72.

(6) Key, pp. 30, 38.

(7) Key, pp. 74, 135.

(8) Key, p. 58.

(9) Key, p. 27.

(10) Key, p. 29.

strong, even to unwise indulgence, and that they never suffered their fatherless children, to be left unprovided, or to starve.<sup>1</sup>

Their nearest approach to English arts or letters was in the painting of deerskins, or their own faces with divers emblems and with significant colours, in which their vanity found gratification.<sup>2</sup> In a like spirit, they were eager for the small looking glasses of the English traders, though to Williams it seemed wonderful that they saw anything in them to excite their admiration. They had separate trades and handicrafts.<sup>3</sup> Some were makers of bows, others of arrows—or of dishes. The women made all the earthen vessels. There were separate classes of hunters, fishers and makers of wampum money. This was of a very uncertain value, easily counterfeited<sup>4</sup> and liable to depreciation. The Indians learned from the English traders some at least of the means of guarding against loss. With grains of Indian corn they learned to reckon large sums, with as much expertness as Europeans, with pens or counters.<sup>5</sup>

The Narragansetts practiced the rude hospitality of savage life, inviting strangers freely, and courteously, and offering them a participation in their meals, though but little had been prepared for themselves.<sup>6</sup> They displayed a formal and ceremonious kindness toward those whose friendship they did not distrust. Williams found that his acts of benevolence towards them, were gratefully remembered and repaid, long after he had forgotten that he had ever rendered a service.<sup>7</sup> They were not so scandalous in their vices as people in Europe. At Williams's first acquaintance with them, they were not drunken or gluttonous, nor were there such crimes among them,—robberies, adulteries, murders, &c.,—as among the English.<sup>8</sup> They purchased

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(1) Key, p. 45.

(2) Key, pp. 107-8, 136, 154.

(3) Key, p. 133.

(4) Key, pp. 128-9, 134.

(5) Key, p. 42.

(6) Key, p. 36.

(7) Key, pp. 30, 31, 32.

(8) Key, pp. 77, 121.

their wives, after the old Asiatic fashion, and in the low state of morals accompanying polygamous households, showed the same watchfulness over their families<sup>1</sup> as did their remote ancestors.

Neighbourhoods were ready to unite for mutual aid.<sup>2</sup> “Men and women, forty, fifty, one hundred, joine, & come in to help freely,”—“breake up their fields, build forts, hunt & fish by common assistance,”—“a very loving sociable speedy way,” says Williams.

The barbaric traits of the Narragansetts were peculiarly offensive to the traders with whom they came in contact. They had the savage lack of truthfulness, and therefore felt but little confidence in each other.<sup>3</sup> The practice of private revenge was common.<sup>4</sup> “It is a rule among them that it is not good for a man to travel without a weapon,” and they seldom journeyed unarmed or alone. Their bad faith greatly increased the difficulty arising from a quarrel with an Englishman, as but little confidence could be reposed in ordinary Indian testimony. They were punctual in observing their bargains,<sup>5</sup> but their virtue was easily overcome by temptation. Perhaps it was from the fear of private revenge that they did not steal from each other, but only from the English. Towards white men they showed barbarian cunning, and not more than barbarian honesty. “Commonly they never shut their doores, day nor night, and ’tis rare that any hurt is done.”<sup>6</sup> When away from home, they trusted their goods with Englishmen rather than with their own people.<sup>7</sup> Williams wrote from his own experience, as the Narragansetts stole his goats from Prudence,<sup>8</sup> though they

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(1)Key, pp. 124, 125.

(2)Key, p. 92.

(3)Key, p. 76.

(4)Key, p. 45.

(5)Key, p. 139.

(6)Key, pp. 50, 139.

(7)Key, p. 52.

(8)Williams to Winthrop, February 15, 1654.



acknowledged that he was their best friend.<sup>1</sup> They were not trustworthy bearers of letters,<sup>2</sup> as they could not be taught the importance of despatch and punctuality in public affairs, and suppressed papers which, they feared, related to themselves. They acquired much cunning in bargaining with the English,<sup>3</sup> but were slow in comprehending the first laws of trade. Williams found it difficult to teach them the cause of fluctuations in prices—why it was, that since by excessive exports of furs from this country, beaver had fallen in London, therefore they must pay more skins and wampum for the English goods which they desired.<sup>4</sup>

On the whole, in the difficulty of collecting the money due him at his trading house, Williams found no marked difference between the Narragansett Indians, and the orthodox Puritans whom he had left behind him at Salem. The Indians were ready to repudiate their obligations when not closely pursued by the merchant, and his former townsmen, when they had driven their creditor into a convenient banishment, paid their debts at their leisure.<sup>5</sup>

Under their unfavorable sanitary conditions, it would seem that not many of the New England Indians attained to old age. Probably the feeble perished early, from the exposure to which they were subjected. Williams observed that they died easily from many diseases, and Gookin, that consumptions were very frequent and fatal among them. They had no medicines, and perhaps were little the worse for the privation. But they practised sweating in a vapour bath heated.

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(1) See also Savage's Winthrop, ed. 1853, I. 103, as to thievishness of Indians.

(2) Williams to Winthrop, April 16, 1638, Narr. Club Pub. VI. 93.

(3) See Wood's "New England's Prospect," p. 88.

(4) Key, p. 129.

(5) Compare Key, p. 139, with Williams's letters, (Narr. Club Pub., VI. 65, 69, 81). 4th series Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll. Vol. 6, (Winthrop Papers), pp. 211, 212. Letter to Mason, A. D. 1670, Narr. Club Pub., VI. 336-37.

Their practice was somewhat violent, but by red hot stones, often, it seems, effective. They had few of the diseases of civilisation,<sup>1</sup> and of such as they had, there was little complexity in the treatment. The priests, as in early times, claimed the possession of all knowledge, of medicine, as of other things. It was Williams's knowledge of physie, as much as anything else, which first secured him the good will of the Narragansetts.<sup>2</sup> They were carefully trained for war and hunting by athletic exercises,<sup>3</sup> were proud of their physical hardihood,<sup>4</sup> and their old men disdained the support of staffs.

In the midst of evils which they could not escape or alleviate, the Narragansetts cultivated an indifference to suffering, or a sullen endurance of it. Men of abler races have done the same. Ancient stoicism had a like origin. The man of modern culture spares no labors or experiments to increase his comforts. Thus, there met here, face to face, two distant ages which had no common ground of harmony or coöperation. The Englishman looked with contempt upon the barbarians which, (if they had ever known it), his ancestors had left so many centuries behind them. A race which would learn nothing, even of the simplest arts which make life comfortable, he regarded with neither hope nor patience. The Indian had the usual savage despite for the enjoyments and resources of civilisation. Physical hardihood was better than moral or intellectual traits which were above his level. He saw that Englishmen shrunk from the endurance of evils, which the Narragansett taught his children to despise—that he could not live without solidly framed houses, stone chimneys, and woollen clothes, and laboured unceasingly to get through life with the smallest amount of suffering. The Indian soon learned to contemn civilisation, as on the whole, effeminate. He rejected its arts and its religion, but could never divest himself of awe, at a

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(1)Key, p. 59.

(2)Key, pp. 156, 157, 158, 159.

(3)Key, p. 146.

(4)Key, p. 76.

power which he recognised, but could not comprehend. During all his intercourse with the settlers, he acquired no taste for their modes of life by which he might have gained some degree of the comfort which is the effect, and in turn, the cause of an advancing civilisation. The Indian was eager for luxuries and stimulants, and for the firearms which aided him in war and hunting. The airy costume of the native required but slender purchases of English cloth. His native deerskin was far more durable, for the pursuit of his game or his enemies, through woods and swamps. He adopted the fishing lines and steel hooks of the English and a few implements which he acknowledged to be superior to his own. But he refused everything which involved the least change in his manner of life. His industry could never be stimulated to anything beyond the providing of present support, and he avoided difficult questions of capital and labour by forcing the women to do all the hard work of the community.

The moral elevation of the Narragansetts corresponded with their manner of life. Their religion was one of the earlier forms of nature worship, which did not prove a more effectual restraint upon their passions, than it has proved in other parts of the world.<sup>1</sup> They adored the sun and moon and stars,<sup>2</sup> and had, says Williams, "plenty of gods or divine powers"—"water, snow," "the earth, bear, deer," &c., the forces or gifts of Nature, to which they owed the greatest obligations. There were also numerous local deities, besides the creator and governor of all. As with all other races, the religion of the Narragansetts found expression in public solemnities and festivals. In time of sickness and draught, war or famine, they assembled, not with national songs, but with violent gesture and outcry, and discourses by their priests, old men, and sages. Once a year, when the harvest was ended, they had a thanksgiving for their hunting—peace, health, plenty or prosperity—with feasting and gifts. Their ritual, Williams learned only from their own

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(1) Key pp. 79, 80, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113.

(2) See Williams to Winthrop, Feb. 28, 1637-8. Narr. Club's ed. of Williams's letters, Narr. Club Pub. VI. 88.

relation of it, "For after once being in their houses and beholding what their worship was, I durst never be an eyewitnesse, spectatour or looker on, lest I should have been partaker of Sathan's inventions and worships, contrary to Ephesians v. 14."<sup>1</sup> These orgies must have been sufficiently repulsive, for sometimes a thousand Narragansetts crowded to the festival.

The Southwest<sup>2</sup> was the pleasant land whence their fathers had come, and there was the abode of their gods. Thence too, came the cheering and pleasant winds and all other gifts of the spring time. Thither too, go the good souls departed, while the bad souls—murderers, thieves and liars—wander restlessly abroad.<sup>3</sup>

Such were some of the chief traits of the Narragansett character, as they appeared to the earliest and most favourable observation of Williams. He sought eagerly for good qualities which might be developed and cultivated, and gladly acknowledged that, however their vision was obscured by barbarous superstitions, they had not lost all the primitive light. All the early New England writers agree in ascribing to the Narragansetts, a character more praiseworthy than that of the other tribes. Hubbard says that they were more civil and courteous to the English, than any other Indians. Gookin that they were "an active, laborious, and ingenious people"<sup>4</sup>—Williams—that the Narragansetts and Mohawks, were friendly to the English, more civilised, and not murderous, like the Pequots and the Mohegans. They never stained "their hands with any English blood, neither in open hostilities nor secret murders."<sup>5</sup>

If his earlier view were not too favourable, deriving its colour from his early enthusiasm, Williams was compelled to paint the Narragansett character, in darker colours, as years

(1) Probably v. 11th.

(2) Key, p. 83.

(3) Key, p. 113,

(4) He was Superintendent of the Massachusetts Indians. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll. 1st Series, I. 210.

(5) See Williams's letter to the Gen. Court of Mass. (Narr. Club's ed., p. 274) Oct. 5, 1654.

went on. Even in his most friendly descriptions, we see evidence of mental & moral degradation. In later days he acknowledged that he had never known the Indians, until after he had lived among them. The process of debasement went on unchecked under the influence of English trade. In the letter just quoted (October 5, 1654), he says of the Narragansetts: "their greatest offences" "have been matters of money." Englishmen<sup>1</sup> travelled alone among them, "with safety and loving kindness." But he adds, "all Indians are extremely treacherous," and would leave the English at their first defeat, or "for the trade of killing English cattle." While recognising the better qualities of the more worthy, he describes the lower Indians as pagans and beasts, wallowing in idleness, stealing, lying, whoring, treachery, witchcrafts, blasphemies and idolatries. Not all of these had been learned from English teachers.

The political institutions of the native race, were the natural outgrowth of their moral habits. Over the Continent of North America they were everywhere wonderfully alike. There was in Rhode Island a monarchy, and a royal race of unknown origin and antiquity.<sup>2</sup> It first comes to view in 1620, fully formed, and, after fifty-seven years of contact with Englishmen, disappears in 1677 from the history of mankind. It was absolute as the governments of such races usually are. Having no system of law, or standing army, the authority of the Sachem had no check, save his own want of popularity, or his feebleness of will. Perhaps, if we knew more of it, it would appear—as the government of Russia was said to be—"a despotism tempered by assassination."<sup>3</sup> The chief Sachems were aware of the precarious nature of their authority.<sup>4</sup> "The Sachims, although they

(1) Narr. Club Pub., VI. 274, 276.

(2) Key, p. 120, 121, 122.

(3) See Williams to General Court of Massachusetts, May 12, 1656. Narr. Club Pub., VI. 300-1. The law of the Natives "in all New England and America, viz.: that the inferior Sachems and subjects shall plant and remove at the pleasure of the highest and supreme Sachems,"—&c.

(4) Key, p. 121.



have an absolute Monarchie over the people: yet they will not conclude of ought that concernes all, either Lawes or Subsidies, or warres, unto which the People are averse, and by gentle perswasion cannot be brought." At one of their consultations or councils, (how constituted we know not), Williams was a spectator, and was much impressed by the deliberation.<sup>1</sup> "Their manner is upon any tidings to sit round, double or treble or more, as their numbers be; I have seene neere a thousand in a round, where English could not well neere halfe so many have sitten. Every one hath his pipe of their tobacco, and a deep silence they make, and attention given to him that speaketh; and many of them will deliver themselves, either in a relation of news, or in a consultation, with very emphaticall speech and great action, commonly an houre, and sometimes two houres together." The Sachem who disregarded the opinion of his council, was left to carry out his designs, unaided, but in ordinary matters, his authority was supreme.

There was the same confusion of powers, executive and judicial, which was common in the Asiatic monarchies. The Sachem exercised them all.<sup>2</sup> They were even the executioners of punishments—either of whipping or of death. The "common sort," most quietly submitted. But when rebellion or resistance to a public execution was apprehended, the chief Sachem prudently sent a chief warrior as his delegate, to "fetch off a head."

The state of the chief Sachem was such as became his rank and authority.<sup>3</sup> "The Sachem's house is farre different from the other houses, both in capacity or receit, and also in the finesse & quality of their mats." It seems that the chief Sachem was like his subjects, in having no permanent dwelling place. No contemporary tradition designates any spot, as the habitation or the grave of Canonicus. He received presents as of right

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(1)Key, p. 62.

(2)Key, p. 122.

(3)Key, p. 120.



from all parts of his empire, and tribute from subject tribes. With these he was able to maintain a guard which attended him on his royal progresses. This, if the place were "conceiv'd dangerous," sometimes consisted of two hundred men with sentinels as in Europe.<sup>1</sup> With such a retinue (40 men) Miantonomo paid his visit to Williams in May, 1637.<sup>2</sup> At home, his servants, in number befitting his station, exempted him from the ordinary labours of his subjects.

This is the only description which has been preserved for us, of the state and circumstances of the Narragansett court, A. D. 1637. In the threatening aspect of public affairs, Massachusetts thought that the friendship, or at least the inaction of the Narragansetts was worth securing, and sent an embassy. From the minuteness of his descriptions, Mr. Savage was of opinion that Johnson was in the company of the Massachusetts commissioners, although not one of them. There was cause for apprehension, if, as Johnson says—the opinion were then current, that the Narragansetts were able to send forth thirty thousand fighting men.<sup>3</sup>

"The Indian King, hearing of their coming, gathered together his chief counsellors, and a great number of his subjects, to give them entertainment, resolving as then that the young King should receive their message, yet in his hearing, they arriving were entertained royally, with respect to the Indian manner. Boil'd chesnuts is their white bread which are very sweet, as if they were mixt with sugar; and because they would be extraordinary in their feasting, they strive for variety after the English manner, boiling Puddings made of beaten corne, putting therein great store of black berries, somewhat like currants. They having thus nobly feasted them, afterwards gave them audience, in a state-house, round, about fifty foot wide, made of long poles stuck in the ground, like your summer-houses in England, and covered round about and on the top with mats, save a small place in the middle of the rooffe, to give light, and let out the smoke.

In this place sate their Sachim with very great attendance: the English coming to deliver their message, to manifest the

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(1)Key, p. 150.

(2)Narr. Club Pub., VI. 17. Williams to Winthrop, May, 1637.

(3)Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll. 2d series, IV. 42, 43, 44.

greater state, the Indian Sachim lay along upon the ground on a mat, and his nobility sate on the ground, with their legs doubled up, their knees touching their chin ; with much sober gravity, they attend the Interpreter's speech. It was matter of much wonderment to the English, to see how solidly and wisely these savage people did consider of the weighty undertaking of a war ; especially old Canonicens, who was very discreet in his answers. The young Sachem was indeed of a more lofty spirit, which wrought his ruine as you may heare, after the decease of the old King. But at this time his answer was, that he did willingly embrace peace with the English, considering right well that although their number was but small in comparison with his people, and that they were but strangers to the woods, swamps, and advantagious places of this wilderness, yet withall he knew that the English were advantaged by their weapons of war, and especially their guns, which were of great terror to his people, and also he had heard they came of a more populous nation by far than all the Indians were, could they be joyn'd together. \* \* The English returne home, having gained the old King's favour so farre as rather to favour them then the Pequods. \* \* The Pequods "make their addresse to old Canonicens, who instead of taking part with them, labours all he can to hush the war in hand, laying before them the sad effects of war ; sometimes proving sad and mournfull to the very victors themselves, but alwayes to the vanquished ; and withall tells them what potent enemies they had to contend with ; whose very weapons and armor were matter of terror, setting their persons a side," &c.

The inferior Sachems copied their chief,<sup>1</sup> but were wholly subject to his command. They received tribute from the locality which was subject to them, and what it lacked, like other such delegates in greater empires, they made up with plunder. Gorton represents Pomham and Socononoco, as mere cattle thieves. In theory, they were the protectors of their neighborhoods, and avenged any injuries done within their precincts. Upon their fidelity, we may have occasion to remark.<sup>2</sup>

The Narragansett constitution had little interest for the settlers, as none of its provisions gave them occasion for intrigue from without. Such as it was, the monarchy passed through all its phases during the only generation of Englishmen who

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(1)Key, p. 121.

(2)Key, pp. 121-122.

saw it. There was first, during twenty-seven years (1620-1647) the rule of a Sachem of great intelligence, courage and good faith, whose firm will none of his inferior Sachems could withstand. Then during thirty years, came a succession of feebler men, unable to control their own passions, or those of their subordinates, and at last, by pressure from without, and from within their borders, borne down with their people, to the final extinction of their race and name.

But one of their civil institutions possesses interest at the present day. "The natives," says Williams,<sup>1</sup> "are very exact and punctuall in the bounds of their Lands belonging to this or that Prince or People, (even to a River, Brooke), &c." But within these borders, they were communists of the most ancient type, and had reached as high a civilisation as communism left to itself, will enable a people to attain. All landed property belonged to the state, or tribe. Individuals or families had only a temporary right of occupaney or *usufructs* of such a portion as they could cultivate during the season, subject to the sachem's orders in case of controversy.

The Narragansetts had no conception of individual or life-long possession. Landed property was neither permanent nor hereditary.<sup>2</sup> They had no guaranty for the stability of the household, and no foundation on which civilised institutions could be built up. The experiment was made under circumstances not unfavourable, and there will be no need to repeat the failure of the Narragansetts and the Wampanoags. Rhode Island saw socialistic ideas tried out to the uttermost, two cen-

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(1)Key, p. 89; In the Narr. Club's ed. (v. I, Narr. Club. Pub. p. 120).

(2)So also, Edward Winslow of Plymouth. Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., 2d series, IX. 95. "Every sachim knoweth how far the bounds and limits of his own country extendeth, and what is his own proper inheritance, out of that, if any of his men desire land to set their corn, he giveth them as much as they can use, and sets them their bounds. In this circuit, whosoever hunteth, if they kill any venison, bring him his fee, which is the fore parts of the same, if it be killed on the land, but if in the water, then the skin thereof; the great sachims or kings know their own bounds or limits of land, as well as the rest."

turies ago, and learned that they could not impart the slightest social or moral elevation.

Such, as Williams has himself described it, was the barbarism which he encountered, without aid from governments, schools, or sects. He was not at first aware of all the obstacles in his way, for much of the knowledge preserved in his "Key" and letters was gained during several years after his Plantation. The project of a settlement among the Indians had long been familiar to him. He had never been in cordial sympathy with the Puritans, but his opinions had been formed amid the broader teachings of the separatists. He early thought that his abode in Massachusetts could be of no long continuance, and so early as his residence in Plymouth (1632), he commenced his preparations for a new home. He applied himself in earnest to gain the friendship of the great chiefs in his neighbourhood. "I spared no cost towards them," says Williams, "and in gifts to Ousamequin and all his, and to Canonicus and all his, tokens and presents, many years before I came in person to the Narragansetts, and therefore when I came, I was welcome to Ousamequin and to the old Sachem Canonicus."<sup>1</sup> It was well that he had done so, for his banishment was sudden and unexpected. He could neither remove his property, nor demand his debts, and began his Plantation in a state of comparative poverty.<sup>2</sup> "My writings are lost." He had no proof of the debts due to him, as he had not been able to bring away his papers in his flight from Salem. Though "shy of the English, to his latest breath,"<sup>3</sup> Canonicus readily renewed his friendship with Williams. "At my first coming to them, Canonicus (*morosus aequae ac barbaræ senex*), was very sour, and accused the Eng-

(1) Compare also Williams's testimony, Dec. 13, 1661, Narr. Club Pub., VI 316-17.

(2) Williams to Winthrop, Dec. 30, 1638, Narr. Club Pub., VI. 127-28.

(3) Canonicus had good reason for his shyness. Their first act was to detach the Wampanoags from his allegiance, on the east, and Connecticut encroached upon his domains upon the west. His empire was, at the coming of Williams, narrowed to the present limits of Rhode Island—and to Block Island, and the islands of the Bay.

(4) Thus in the printed text. "Barbarus" is no doubt what Williams meant.

lish and myself, for sending the plague among them, \* \* I sweetened his spirit,"<sup>1</sup> probably with a hope of favours to come. The old Sachem whose alliance was thus secured, was the ablest, even if we may not say the only able, man of whom the Narragansett history preserves any record. He had then numbered more than three score and ten years. His meeting with Williams was by no means his first acquaintance with Europeans. During nearly twenty years, before the first Englishman had set his cabin in Mooshassuc or Acquetneck, trading sloops from New Amsterdam, bearing the flag of the Dutch West India Company had carried their merchandise to the tribes living by the Sound and Narragansett Bay.<sup>2</sup> These had already acquired a longing for sugar, personal ornaments, and fire arms. So early as 1631,<sup>3</sup> the son of Canonicus had visited Governor Winthrop in Boston, and there had been an exchange of gifts.<sup>4</sup> It is not improbable that the Sachem, or some trusty informant had gone on a like errand to New Amsterdam. He was thus acquainted with more than one race of white men, and had time to study their several characteristics. All the Englishmen who had any dealings with the old Sachem were impressed with his ability.<sup>5</sup> The messengers to Canonicus informed Gov. Winthrop, that "they observed in the sachem much state, great command over his men, and marvellous wisdom in his answers, and the carriage of the whole treaty, clearing himself and his neighbors of the murder" (of John Oldham), "and offering assistance for revenge of it, yet upon very safe and wary conditions." Through his rough native vigour, he had become, as Gov. Winthrop says, "a chief sachem in New England." His manner befitted the character, for he was "always princely."

The government of Massachusetts, in its dealings with the Indians was generally bold, defiant and contemptuous. When-

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(1) Williams to Winthrop, May, 1637, Narr. Club Pub., VI. 16.

(2) French vessels from Nova Scotia had also visited their coast.

(3) Savage's "Winthrop," ed. 1853, I. 69-70.

(4) Ibid., I. 227-29.

(5) Ibid., I. 227, 229, (1636).



ever they wished to see even a Sachem, they sent him a peremptory order to come to Boston.<sup>1</sup> Miantonomo was thus repeatedly sent for, as on Oct. 21, 1636,<sup>2</sup> when he was received at Roxbury by a military escort.<sup>3</sup> This is the manner in which Massachusetts made a treaty.<sup>4</sup> "In the morning we met again and concluded the peace, upon the articles underwritten, which the governor subscribed, and they also subscribed with their marks." "But because we could not well make them understand the articles perfectly, we agreed to send a copy of them to Mr. Williams, who could best interpret them to them." This done, "they took leave, and were conveyed out of towne by some musketeers, and dismissed with a volley of shot." The Narragansetts were forced to sign what they did not comprehend, and were referred to Mr. Williams who had been lately banished—to learn what it meant. Canonicus alone never showed any awe of the magistrates and elders of "the Bay."<sup>5</sup> Sometime after the murder of his nephew, Miantonomo, Massachusetts sent two messengers to the Narragansetts to dissuade them from taking counsel with "evil men, and such as we have banished from us, and to persuade them to sit still and to have more regard to us than such as Gorton, etc." The bearers of this unselfish and disinterested counsel came to the house of Canonicus. "When our messengers came to them, Canonicus would not admit them into his wigwam for two hours, but suffered them to stay in the rain. When he did admit them, he lay along upon his couch and would not speak to them more than a few froward speeches, but referred them to Pesacus, who, coming after some four hours, carried them into an ordinary wigwam, and there had conference with them most part of the night. Their answers were witty and full to the questions," &c. Even Governor Winthrop seems to have thought it worth while to secure the good will of

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(1) Savage's "Winthrop," I. 235-36.

(2) Compare also II. 9, (in 1640).

(3) Ibid., I. 237.

(4) Ibid., I. 237.

(5) Ibid., II. 203, (A. D. 1644).



Canonicus, and to have sent occasionally presents of sugar, as an assurance of friendship.<sup>1</sup>

We have no extended or trustworthy account of his ancestry or of his early life. He first comes to view, when his military ambition, if he had any, had been fully satisfied. Old age alone might incline him to peaceful counsels. His dealings with the white races, were but the completion of his long, barbarian, rule. He has left us no record of his thoughts, but if we may infer his opinions from the unbroken tenor of his life, we may believe that he, alone of the New England Sachems, comprehended that a new age was coming in. He was aware that his people were now confronted with a race, vigorous, enterprising, united, with resources far exceeding his own—before whom an Indian confederacy was but a rope of sand. He appreciated the fact that soon after their arrival, the English had alienated the Wampanoags from his allegiance, and that no dependency was left to him, save the small kindred tribe of the Niantics.<sup>2</sup>

The remembrance of the swift destruction which had overtaken the Pequots when they had resisted the Englishmen's will, made the wary old Narragansett cautious of any encounter. Their power of combination, and the force of their government, so much superior to that of his own, made him distrustful of his superiority of numbers. For he knew not what forces were behind the new comers—held quietly in reserve.

He knew that a nation greater than his own (the Mohawks) either would not, or could not expel the Dutch from Manhattan. Little as he knew about Europe, he felt that there was a power behind the Englishmen, which would conquer in the end. He had discernment to perceive (what it would have been well for Philip and Canonechet to have learned by forty years more of observation) that a race whose pioneers could carry multitudes

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(1) Williams to Winthrop, Feb. 28, 1637-8, Narr. Club Pub., VI. 86-87,.

(2) The legislature of Rhode Island made no distinction of tribes and races, but called them both alike, "Indians," as soon as they begun to legislate for them, and regulated the sale of rum and the use of the whipping post, by one law for Narragansett and Niantic.

across a sea impassable to him, and fabricate utensils of iron, and set their houses upon foundations of stone, who had flocks and herds and probably other resources yet unknown, could not be starved or exterminated or driven away. He had the wisdom to make the best of neighbours whom he had not invited, and whom he could not expel. His barbaric sense of honour coincided with his views of interest. It was for his benefit that there should be in his neighbourhood, rival traders less exacting than the Dutch, and less overbearing than the men of Massachusetts Bay, and who, being within his own territory could be made tributaries to his revenue. He accepted the situation, and with all his force of will, compelled his people to acquiesce in it.<sup>1</sup> Said Williams, that "wise and peaceable prince" declared, "I have never suffered any wrong to be offered to the English since they landed: nor never will." During the whole of his remaining years, Winthrop and Williams recognise the fact that Canonicus kept the peace of New England.

Even if the old Sachem's action had been prompted only by an enlightened self interest, even this was far above the barbarian level. With the fearful portents, even then threatening his people, it is doing him no discredit to suspect, that at best, he hoped like a potentate of later days, that things would outlast his time, and "after him,—the deluge."

Williams's earlier enthusiasm was then at its height, and with the sanguine spirit of his hopeful days, he believed that Canonicus's grants of Indian territory were "gifts of love." In his devotion to the great project of his life, he seems to have misconceived the old Sachem's feelings, and to have believed that his own benevolence must awaken a like emotion in return. The manner and tone of Williams were doubtless more kindly than those of the white Sachems of "the Bay," and gained him a more friendly hearing. Still, like some more recent missionaries, he believed that his offers of spiritual benefits excited the regard, which was in fact due to more mercenary hopes or expect-

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(1)Key, p. 64.

tations. Each, in fact misconceived the other's character and purposes. Williams thought that he had secured the "love" of a shrewd old Indian politician, who had long been dead to any motive but his own interests, and Canonicus was not aware that he was dealing with an exile and a fugitive, without influence which could do him service.<sup>1</sup> That such an able chief should have freely bestowed his best lands upon strangers with whose religion, manners, and designs he had no sympathy, seems to have been an imagination suggested by Williams's early hopes. John Clarke, a man of more cool and practical judgment, says that Acquetneck was a purchase. Williams<sup>2</sup> calls it a gift of love. It appears that the transfer was accompanied by a present which the people at Acquetneck may well have deemed a valuable consideration, by whatever name it may have been disguised. We have in Williams's writings frequent mention of the favourable dispositions of the Indians, but equally copious accounts of the largesses which they expected and received.<sup>3</sup> "Not a penny was demanded for either," but "what was paid was only gratuity, though I chose, for better assurance and form, to call it sale."<sup>4</sup>

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(1) See testimony of Williams, August 25, 1658, Narr. Club Pub., VI. 305-6, also Clarke's Narrative, Callender's Hist. Discourse, Elton's ed., R. I. Hist. Soc. Coll., IV. 85, 86, as to gratuities. Bartlett's R. I. Col. Records, I. 45-51, 1637-8, conveyance of Acquetneck.

(2) Letter to Winthrop, June, 1638, p. 104. Deposition, June 18, 1682, Narr. Club Pub., VI. 406-8.

(3) Backus's History, I. 73.

(4) Williams to Winthrop, June, 1638, Narr. Club Pub., VI. 104. Williams's testimony at Providence, December 13, 1661, Narr. Club Pub., VI. 317. Williams's Deed of 1661, Bartlett's R. I. Col. Records, I. 22-25. Williams says that the purchase at Mooshassuc was not obtained by money. Narr. Club Pub., VI. 407. Williams's letters, etc., Narr. Club Pub., VI. 408, (June 18, 1682). "I never denied him or Miantonomo, whatever they desired of me, as to goods or gifts or use of my boats or pinnace, or the travels of my own person day and night." "It is known what favor God pleased to give me with old Canonicus, (though at a dear-bought rate) so that I had what I would." October 18, 1677, Narr. Club Pub., VI. 393.

Canonicus frequently needed groceries, for which he never thought of paying. The deeds of purchase were followed by gifts and goods for the Sachems, and the use of his boats at their will.<sup>1</sup> The Indians expected such unceasing returns, that gifts from were them very dear bargains.<sup>2</sup> Notwithstanding his love for Williams, Canonicus never did anything for him for which he did not exact a full equivalent in cloth, stores or other supplies, especially sugar. He never gave the slightest aid to Williams's benevolent designs, but he allowed him to pursue them without molestation.<sup>3</sup> The Indians' practice in their private dealings was of a like nature.<sup>4</sup> "The Indians of this country have a way of" "*giving* their commodities freely, by which they get better bargains than if they stood stiffly on their tearmes of" "trading." "And when not satisfied to the utmost they grudge, revile, &c." The chiefs followed a like course of dealing in their grants of the tribal lands.

But worse than this,—the Indians seem to have regarded a gift as revocable at pleasure. The phrase "an Indian gift" has descended to us, as a synonym for anything but an act of generosity. The chiefs may have been ready to make grants of land, if they thought that they could resume them at their will. Throughout the lifetime of Canonicus, the Plantations were in effect, his tributaries, however they may have endeavored to conceal the fact, even from themselves. He permitted Williams to instruct his people in civilisation and decency, on condition of receiving all his groceries for nothing. Williams in later days,<sup>5</sup> well said that the friendship of Canonicus was purchased at a "dear-bought rate." During ten years, he had what he wanted from Williams's trading-house, without pay, and when he felt that his end was near, he sent a parting message, that

(1) See also Winthrop's Journal, (October 21, 1636), I. 237.

(2) See Callender's Discourse, pp. 85-86.

(3) Williams to Commissioners of the United Colonies, October 18, 1677. Narr. Club Pub., VI. 393.

(4) "Bloody Tenent yet more Bloody," (ed. 1652) p. 217. (Narr. Club Pub., IV. 367).

(5) October 18, 1677. Narr. Club Pub., VI, 393.

he expected to be buried in cloth, to be furnished by Mr. Williams, as a free gift. But he fulfilled his obligations as he understood them. He could not prevent occasional brawls or murders. But after the grant of the "Plantations," he restrained his inferior Sachems, sanctioned no insults or hostilities, and gave quiet, and facilities for trade.

Among all the tribes of North America, the monarchy is, in general, hereditary. But the rule is not without important exceptions. The son of a Sachem may be set aside and another member of his family, or even a distinguished warrior, may be exalted to his place. Fitness and merit, according to the Indian conception of them, might be required in a successor. At the settlement of Mooshassuc, the Narragansett sovereignty afforded a signal illustration of this ancient rule. The sons of Canonieus had been displaced from the family birthright, perhaps as incompetent to its duties, and Miantonomo his nephew had been joined with him in the Sachemship, as his associate and successor. Williams, with his slight interest in Narragansett history, gives no explanation of the fact. The sons of Canonieus make but little display during the remaining years of their tribe. It is unknown whether it was by his own consent, that his posterity were thus deposed, or whether the unwelcome act of superseding his own children was forced upon him by a national council of the Narragansetts. Williams found Miantonomo acting conjointly with his uncle in the gravest matters of sovereignty. The new chief was young, active, courageous, and well qualified for barbarian rule, but had not yet acquired his uncle's self-control. From Williams's brief notices of him, we learn that he shared a not unnatural pride in his race and lineage. He was anxious to gain the approval of the English, and did not conceal his disappointment when he failed to secure it. From Winthrop we learn that he was sensitive to any disrespect which might bring him into discredit with his own people,—that he had a "good understanding in the principles of justice and equity."<sup>1</sup> He joined with Canonieus in the sale of the

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(1) Savage's Winthrop, ed. 1853, II. 98.



Plantations to Williams, recognizing the "many kindnesses and services" which Williams had done to them both. They both showed sufficient zeal for the punishment of the Pequot murderers of John Oldham at Block Island.<sup>1</sup> Miantonomo on all occasions proved himself friendly to Massachusetts. But the more kindly spirit of Williams gained an influence over him, and his judgments were always treated with respect. The nearer neighbourhood of Samuel Gorton in Warwick, gave him more frequent access to the young Sachem, and opportunity for disastrous counsels. Gorton was bold, pertinacious, and had the courage of his convictions, but his wisdom and discretion have been questioned. Gorton had a kindly feeling towards the Narragansetts, and in his way, had sought to do them good. He had thus gained the regard of Miantonomo, who was guided by him in much of his policy. He had received from Gorton his arms and goods, as well as many of his lessons of civilised life. In return, it was the desire of the Sachem that Warwick should be a possession of Rhode Island and not Massachusetts. While he lived, he was the most formidable obstacle in the way of the elders and magistrates of Boston. These scrupled at no means of ridding themselves of a chief who would not be their instrument or subject. His murder, with the assent of the authorities of the Puritan colonies, was the only reward which he received for the aid which he gave them in their Pequot war. It was not an event to be forgotten, and doubtless gave fierce vindictiveness to the efforts of the Narragansetts in the last days of Philip of Mount Hope.

It is not probable that, had he lived, Miantonomo could have greatly prolonged the national life of the Narragansetts. But under the influence of Williams, he might have guided to better issues, the passions which wrought their destruction.<sup>2</sup>

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(1) See Savage's Winthrop, I. 225-28, 229, 265-66, 283, 291.

(2) His character has been sufficiently vindicated by Mr. Savage, the learned editor of Winthrop, (II. 98, 100-1, 159-61, 162), against the counsel of the five "most judicious [Boston] elders," who advised that Miantonomo should be put to death. p. 158.



These were the chiefs—then in full popularity and power, with whom Williams dealt on his first arrival in Mooshassuc. If he over-estimated their love for him, they on their part were equally mistaken in a matter of graver importance, which involved the peace, perhaps the existence of the colony. Before his banishment, some of the chiefs had visited Boston, and had there seen Williams and Coddington associating upon terms of equality with the great English Sachems of “the Bay.” They were not well informed of the current politics of Massachusetts, and did not know that Williams (after 1636), sustained very different relations with his former friends. They received him, believing him to be, not an exile, but an agent, or pioneer of Massachusetts, whose firmness of will they had already learned to respect. Williams himself was not aware of their mistake, and when he learned it, it would have been unsafe to inform the Indians of the real weakness of his position. After two years’ abode among them, they had not learned that he was a fugitive. In June 1638,<sup>1</sup> Williams wrote to Winthrop :

“The Sachems” “have ever conceived that myself and Mr. Coddington, (whom they knew so many years a Sachem at Boston), were far from being rejected by yourselves, as you please to write, for if the Lord had not hid it from their eyes, I am sure you had not been thus troubled by myself at present.”<sup>2</sup>

To increase the perplexity of the founders, there was one more error which yielded its fruit in later days. It may be doubted if the Indian grants were ever understood by both parties, in the same sense. The Sachems and their subjects seem to have intended to convey only a present, and usufructuary right,—a mere *user*, or a right of common, and not a permanent exclusive and individual title, and estate. The original documents were drawn by Englishmen, in terms and phrase—

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(1) Narr. Club Pub., VI. 104-5.

(2) This letter was written after the Pequot war (1636-7). It proves the influence of Williams among the Narragansetts, while they believed him to be an agent of Massachusetts. It preserves a fact not mentioned elsewhere—the Indian ignorance of their true position, which preserved the lives of Williams and Coddington, until they could gain a firm foothold upon the territory.

ology adapted to their own law, and were subscribed by Indian communists, who had no conception of separate, and hereditary estates in fee simple, as understood in Westminster Hall. If the English interpretation were correct, Canonicus had sold the best portion of the tribal lands to strangers for a mere transitory consideration. After the grant of Mooshassuc to Williams, of Acquetneck to Coddington, and of Shawomet to Gorton, the most valuable fields and fisheries of his subjects were nearly gone. He had little ground on which he had a right to set his foot. It is difficult to believe that the shrewd old Sachem intended to dispossess his own people, or to give to strangers a better title than that enjoyed by the Narragansetts. The Indians themselves gave this construction to the grants of their chiefs, and as ever before, showed that they had no conception of permanent and individual property in land. Wherever one of them found among the white settlements, a field uncultivated, he had no hesitation in planting his corn with a mere "squatter's" title. On the other hand, when the Englishmen bought out an Indian occupant, he only bought out his *user* or right of occupancy for the season, or, at the most, his growing crops, and in another year, the process must be repeated, with the next Indian planter. The Sachems probably regarded the English as their tributaries and their grants as revocable, differing only from Indians, in living under the rule of their own magistrates and laws. The inferior Indians planted the lands at Providence and Warwick, after they had been sold, in the same manner as before. Without asking permission they lived indiscriminately among the English, with "mingled fields." The chiefs still exercised sovereignty and jurisdiction over their own people residing upon the lands which had been granted to the white men. The tenures of the lands were not very important so long as the English were too few to cultivate or even to possess the estate which they had purchased. Englishmen and Indians lived together in near neighborhoods until in the second generation, their society became a nuisance, of which each desired to be rid. We may well believe that even such grants

as these would never have been made, had the Sachems foreseen that, instead of being a helpless few who sought to establish trading-houses, within their territory and under their control, Williams and his associates were but the pioneers of thousands, for whom the whole realm of the Narragansetts would not be too ample, and who were accustomed to tolerate no sovereignty but their own.

With all these misapprehensions, full of ill auguries on either side, the work of the Plantations began. But many obstacles were to be removed, before Williams could prosecute the benevolent work which had been the motive to his purchase. He was not desirous of power—had no longing to become the founder of a colony or even of a town—but only, of a mission to the Narragansetts. Events beyond his control, had forced upon him the admission of contentious associates, and now he was compelled to take a chief part in a new social organization,—in the laying out of highways, and the allotment of lands. Then came the formation of a religious society, with its controversies and disruption, and then the strifes with his own grantees, over the Proprietary title,—of which he was never to see the end. He had far less time than he had expected, to devote to the moral elevation of the Narragansetts, and his efforts ended only in disappointment.

Similar attempts, under more favorable circumstances, were made in the neighbouring colonies. Their failure was due to causes everywhere at work, and which prepared equally for the failure of Williams.<sup>1</sup> Ten years later, in Massachusetts, the benevolent purposes of Eliot were aided by the local government, by public money, and by the charitable gifts of English friends.<sup>2</sup> The colony was the strongest and most efficient of all the English Plantations. Its elders never spared a vigorous use of physical force. This had made its impression upon the barbarians, who are everywhere much inclined to estimate a

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(1) Eliot began his work about 1646. See Gookin's "Historical Collections." (Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., 1st series, I. 166).

(2) *Ibid.*, I. 172-74.

religion by the power at its command. The religious teachers of Massachusetts could not be treated with contempt or disrespect. The views of Christian doctrine there prevalent were far from being accepted by all Englishmen at that day, and they were far less fitted to the comprehension of Indians. The opinions of the magistrates and elders were urged upon the natives with a kindliness and toleration far greater than that with which they were pressed upon dissenting white men. The testimony of Williams, Gorton and Obadiah Holmes is ample to this effect. The Indian school at Natick was liberally supported and the coercive power of the colony was at its service. The institution was somewhat like a "Reform School" of the present day. The Indian pupils were surrounded by Englishmen—placed under restraint, and compelled to practice Christian virtue, whether they liked it or not. But the number of Eliot's assistants was comparatively small. Few or none could gain proficiency in the Indian tongue, or become conversant with Indian habits of thought.<sup>1</sup> The chief effect produced upon the native race was in the Colony of Massachusetts. Yet the number of converts was not large, and the effect even upon them was in many cases superficial. The young Indians melted away under the sedentary and studious habits of civilization, more rapidly than under their original barbarism. In view of the many deaths, and the little apparent success, "Some conceived," "that the time of the great harvest of their ingathering is not yet come, but will follow after calling of the Jews."<sup>2</sup> The early policy of Massachusetts and the advice given by the elders concerning the slaughter of Miantonomo, gave some plausibility to this opinion. With astonishing imprudence the government of Massachusetts allowed the Indians to be present at musters and trainings, and to learn how to "handle, mend, and fix their muskets." At Natick, the "praying Indians" were exer-

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(1)Gookin, in Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., 1st series, I. 210; Bentley's "Description and history of Salem," in Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., 1st series, VI. 250.

(2)Gookin, in Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., 1st series, I. 174.

cised as a train-band under officers of their own.<sup>1</sup> As a consequence in a time of trouble, the Indian in their natures prevailed over the Christian. Some of them became the most cruel and barbarous enemies of the English. Two relapsed converts were hanged at Boston after Philip's war. The "praying Indians" could not restrain their uncivilized brethren, and had little influence upon the fortunes of their race.

The like fruitless efforts for the benefit of the Indians were made in Connecticut, and with very similar results. The law gave its aid for the purpose of conversion, but the enforced observance of the Puritan "Sabbath," did not give attractiveness to the religion of the white men. Eliot preached in their own language to an assembly of Connecticut Indians. When he had finished his address, he desires an answer from them, whether they accepted his offers. The Sachems utterly refused them. They said "the English had taken away their lands, and were now attempting to make them servants." They regarded Christianity merely as an instrument of subjugation, in the hands of a conquering race. Recent English writers have given the same reason for the slow progress of the Christian religion among the native races of British India. Efforts for the benefit of the Indians in Connecticut were not wanting but so long as their tribal government continued, all met with "little success."

In marked contrast with his Puritan neighbours, Williams

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(1) See E. Randolph's "Narrative," in "Hutchinson papers," II. 225, 227-28, A.D. 1676. ("Publications of the Prince Society.")

"The English have contributed much to their misfortunes, for they first taught the Indians the use of armes, and admitted them to be present at all their musters and trainings, and shewed them how to handle, mend and fix their muskets, and have been furnished with all sorts of armes by permission of the government, so that the Indians are become excellent firemen. And at Natick there was a gathered church of praying Indians, who were exercised as trained bands, under officers of their owne; these have been the most barbarous and cruel enemies to the English of any others. Capt. Tom, their leader, being lately taken and hanged at Boston, with one other of their chiefs."



was unaided and alone. His mission, his plantation at Prudence, and his "trading house" at Narragansett, all claimed his attention, and the Englishmen about him were too much absorbed by social problems of their own, to feel any interest in his work. But now that he had begun it, he pursued it with enthusiasm and self devotion. While at Plymouth in 1632, he had written to Gov. Winthrop that he longed after "the natives' souls,"<sup>1</sup> and now (1637-8<sup>2</sup>) again, that he had "great hopes" "of many a poor Indian soul." With no encouragement from others, he grappled single-handed with the barbarism of the Narragansetts. He had not the leisure, or the income of Eliot, for the study of Indian grammar, nor the support which Eliot received from the civil power. Yet he persevered in the midst of hard labour for his daily bread—"at the plough, and at the oar." Even the first difficulty, "their barbarous rockie speech," he had never fully surmounted.<sup>3</sup> With his best efforts, he knew that he was but imperfectly acquainted with the language.<sup>4</sup> From the remarks of Williams it may be inferred that neither he nor Eliot was ever able to deliver a fluent oration in the Indian tongue, but that their discourses were conversational, and that whenever either met with an obstacle or was at a loss for a word, he would enter into enquiries and explanations until he was understood. It was an exhausting labour to speak in a tongue imperfectly acquired, and Williams's vocabulary was sometimes exhausted,—"as farre as my language would reach," says Williams of one of his discourses.<sup>5</sup>

The doctrines which Williams proposed to teach the Narragansetts are fully set forth in his published writings, and need no remark. Their effect was impaired by the opinion which he entertained, that the ancient church was in suspense, or had

(1) Williams's letters, Narr. Club Pub., I. 2.

(2) Ibid., I. 88. (Feb. 28th).

(3) "George Fox digg'd out of his Burrowes," in Narr. Club Pub., V. 465.

(4) See Key, pp. 22, 30, 31, 117. Knowles's "Roger Williams," p. 328. "Bloody Tenent yet more bloody." (Narr. Club Pub., IV. 371-72).

Callender's Hist. discourse, (R. I. Hist. Soc. Coll., IV. 110-11).

(5) Key, p. 117.



passed away, and that its observances had perished with it. His precepts were therefore offered without the support of any visible institutions even that of the usual Lord's Day.<sup>1</sup> He could avail himself of no ritual such as the French missionaries in Canada have employed with a partial success. He even doubted if any church then existed in the world. He was, at times, discouraged by the want of a lawful warrant or commission as an apostle,<sup>2</sup> but especially by the inseparable difficulty of preaching Christianity to the Narragansetts, in their own language, without inspiration.<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, the Narragansetts were but unpromising pupils for any, and especially for a religious teacher. They were willing to listen to Williams, and set no hindrances in his way. They were satisfied with the state into which they had been born, and showed an indifference to other men's religious opinions, in which Williams was glad to trace some resemblance to his own liberty of conscience.<sup>4</sup> They were not susceptible of the strong religious emotions common to the races of African origin, and through which they are easily moved by the teachings of superstition or of common sense. In view of what He had enabled them to accomplish, the Narragansetts readily acknowledged that the Englishmen's God was greater than their own.<sup>5</sup> But to a people who had no conception of any but local deities, this was but a slight advance towards conversion. Such observation of civilised life as they had enjoyed, assured them that they could not bear its restraints and its cap-

(1)Key, p. 117.

(2)See Williams to Winthrop, Dec. 10, 1649. Narr. Club Pub., VI. 188. Callender's Hist. discourse, R. I. Hist. Soc. Coll., IV. 110-11.

(3)See "The bloody Tenent yet more bloody." Narr. Club Pub., IV. 219, 220, 370, 371, 372. See also p. 373, as follows:—"Trere being no helpes of Art and learning amongst them, I see not how without constant use of a Miracle any man is able to attaine to any proprietic of speech amongst them even in common things." This was so late as A.D. 1652.

(4)Key, p. 113.

(5)Key, p. 20.

tivity. They were conscious of no wants which the teachings of Williams could satisfy. He awakened in them no doubts, zeal or enquiry. The Narragansetts listened with respect, but with indifference, and turned readily from theology to trade, medicine, or politics.

These hindrances in the pathway of Williams were serious enough, but in the acts of those about him, he met with discouragements such as few other American missionaries have encountered, and they did not diminish as years went on. Canonicus was silent and morose, but he kept his promises, and allowed Williams to instruct his people, so long as his supply of groceries was undiminished. The inferior Sachems were from the first, hostile. Their rule was despotic, based upon the superstition of their subjects, and supported by the sorceries and magic of their priests.<sup>1</sup> The chiefs were conservative—satisfied with the stone age, in which they had been born, and had an instinctive dread of the iron age which was coming in. They saw clearly that Williams's teaching would be fatal to their own power. Such opposition was beyond the reach of argument. The conduct of the other colonies towards the Narragansetts was not without its influence.<sup>2</sup> At an early day Williams deemed it an unfortunate error in the policy of Massachusetts, that it was wavering and unsettled. Sometimes the government made treaties with the Indians, as if they were independent powers, and then issued peremptory orders to them, as if they had been mere inferiors and subjects. The treaty with Miantonomo,<sup>3</sup> and his subsequent captivity and death, (1642), exhibit in the strongest light, the want of uniformity in their dealings, and the ancient contempt of Englishmen, for the rights and feelings of all races but their own. It seems wonderful that Massachusetts, after this, should have expected

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(1) Key, p. 112. Gookin, in Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., 1st series, I. 210.

(2) Williams to Winthrop, June, 1638. Narr. Club Pub., VI. 101, and p. 55, note.

(3) Savage's "Winthrop," ed. 1853, I. 236-38, 283, (Oct. 21, 1636, and Aug. 26, 1637).

good faith in return. The Sachems did not accurately distinguish the politics of different colonies, and knew not that they could hope any more from Rhode Island than from her neighbours. The "praying Indians" of Massachusetts seem to have caught the intolerant tone of their masters.<sup>1</sup> The Narragansetts were alarmed, and besought Williams "to present their petition to the high Sachems of England, that they might not be forced from their religion, and for not changing their religion be invaded by war, for they said they were daily visited with threatenings by Indians that came from about the Massachusetts, that if they would not pray, they should be destroyed by war." Williams during his next visit to England invited the attention of Cromwell to the subject, and nothing more was heard of such methods of conversion. The pious opinions which we have noted, concerning the diabolic origin and guidance of the Indian tribes, tended to destroy all kindly regard for the inferior race, and were scarcely consistent with the maintenance of peace. It was no unreasonable apprehension, that if the emissaries of Massachusetts gained a foothold among them, the Narragansetts would see their territories wrested from them as part of the kingdom of Satan, and annexed to the true Israel at "the Bay." They would listen to no missionaries from Massachusetts or Connecticut, in whom they saw only agents for their subjugation. The kindly spirit of Williams gained him a hearing, but it did no more.

There were other enemies to the Narragansetts, and to the colony, scarcely less formidable than Massachusetts. The Dutch at New Amsterdam had been among the earliest traders in Narragansett Bay. They were supported by a great commercial company, were protected by armed vessels and could offer goods more various and cheap, than the Indians could obtain elsewhere. Nothing but superior force could compel them to abandon their advantage. They could bid defiance to the laws of Rhode Island, which had no navy, and they could

(1) See Williams's letters to General Court of Massachusetts, Oct. 5, 1654. Nov. 15, 1655. Narr. Club Pub., VI. 270-71, 293.

neither be punished nor driven away. After the union of the towns, under one legislature,—in the same year with the death of the Sachem, Canonicus,—the Colony first attempted some vigorous measures against its enemies from without. In May, 1647, the French and Dutch were prohibited trading with the Indians of Rhode Island. Such enemies were not terrified by a mere paper warfare. Political as well as mercantile rivalry incited the Dutch to persevere. They even fancied that they had an interest in the destruction of New England. They were not unwilling to encourage Indian depredations, nor to engage in the like, themselves.<sup>1</sup> In time of peace, the Dutch pinnaces plundered Williams of his goats at Prudence, and Narragansett Bay could not be closed against Dutch traders in powder and rum. The name of “Dutch Island” preserves the memory of one of their earliest resorts, and proves how tenaciously they defied the legislation of the colony, and prepared the destruction of the tribes.<sup>2</sup> Newport and Portsmouth had endeavoured to suppress the trade in arms and powder with the Island Indians, in 1640, but with no better success.<sup>3</sup> In time of war, the Dutch were ready to stir up<sup>4</sup> the Indians of New England against their English neighbours. The unavailing legislation of the colony may be read at large in the colony records.<sup>5</sup> It is believed that neither the colony nor any of its citizens were materially enriched by the enforcement of this act.<sup>6</sup> Says

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(1) Williams to Winthrop, Feb. 15, 1654. Narr. Club Pub., VI. 282. Also to Mass. Gen. Court, Nov. 15, 1655, p. 296.

(2) The renewal of this prohibition of the Dutch, in 1652 and 1654, only proves that the former had been ineffectual. See Bartlett's R. I. Col. Records, I. 155, 226, 243, 324. Arnold's "Rhode Island," I. 251-52.

(3) R. I. Col. Rec., I. 123.

(4) Trumbull's Hist. Conn. I. 119-120.

(5) R. I. Col. Records, I. 279, Aug. 1654. "It is ordered that neither French nor Dutch shall trade any goods with any Indians within this jurisdiction uppon paine of forfeiture of vessell and goods; one halfe to ye Town Treasurie in which it is taken, or to ye Generall Assemblie if taken out of ye Townes; ye other halfe to those that take it."

(6) See also R. I. Col. Records, A. D. 1655-6, I. 324-29.

Williams,<sup>1</sup> the Indians were "filled with artillery," by the Dutch.

Even the stronger colonies of Massachusetts and Connecticut were powerless against this danger. From Fort Orange, (*Aurania*), now Albany, the Dutch traders came down through the forest pathways of Western Massachusetts and furnished the Indians with powder and "strong waters."<sup>2</sup> We are less informed of the commercial adventures of the French from Canada and Nova Scotia. But they were not inactive visitors of the Bay, and aided in overstocking the market. Before 1643, the Indians had so many French guns, that the course of trade became inverted, and in turn they sold them to the English. The citizens of the Plantations were not left behind in this reckless competition. In the early days of the Town there was a sort of Custom House established under the colonial authority, (March, 1658), and during several years, (until the charter of Charles II), the amount of entries of imported wine and spirits, proves what was the chief staple of the Indian trade. The early colonial legislation, vainly endeavouring to restrain the sale of liquors to the Indians, shows what was, at that day, esteemed the chief public danger. This may be read at large in the Rhode Island Colonial Records. It would have been as effectual as any modern enactments, could it only have been enforced, but the colonists were few and their political organization feeble.<sup>3</sup>

In everything which concerned the relations of the English with their barbarous neighbours, Williams showed zeal, and self-denial.<sup>4</sup> At the General Court at Warwick, May 22, 1649, it was "granted unto Mr. Roger Williams to have leave to sell a little wine or stronge water to some natives in theare

(1) April 15, 1649. May 12, 1656. Narr. Club Pub., VI. 173, 303.

(2) Key, pp. 86, 149, A. D. 1642,

(3) As the legislative enactments of Rhode Island concerning the sale of strong drink, have been recently collected and published by the Hon. John H. Stiness of the Supreme Court of Rhode Island, it will be necessary to make but a brief reference to them in this paper,

(4) See R. I. Col. Records, I. 219,



sickness.”<sup>1</sup> At a later day, (November 15, 1655<sup>2</sup>), Williams wrote to the General Court of Massachusetts, concerning the sale of arms, “I have refused the gain of thousands by such a murderous trade.” But he found few imitators. It may be believed that even some of the Narragansetts had taken up the practice of unlicensed dealing in Dutch spirits. In the days of the unavailing prohibition of Dutch trade with the Indians, occurs the following Act of the Assembly,<sup>3</sup> “It is ordered that no liquers shall be sould to any Indians by any one within this Colonie, under ye penalty of five poundes for every default, one halfe to ye complainer, and ye other halfe to ye Towne Treasurie,” etc., “And it shall be lawfull for any one of this Colonie; to take away any liquer from any Indians that they shall finde havinge any within any of ye precinques of ye severall Townes.”<sup>4</sup> An Indian whose good fortune in hunting and trapping had furnished him with a larger than his usual number of skins of beaver or otter, could take them to Dutch Island, and there lay in a supply of “strong waters” sufficient to keep an Indian village in an uproar and to make the highways of a whole neighbourhood unsafe. The practice of a secret retail trade among the Indians themselves, could not be reached by ordinary legal proceedings. It became necessary to allow summary confiscation and forfeiture, by any one who, in a secluded neighborhood, should discover a hidden and unlicensed store.

But the appointment of two ordinary keepers in each town with the exclusive right to sell strong drink, to English or Indians, and the prohibition of the sale to any Indian of more than a quarter of a pint a day, had little effect in “ye preventing of ye great mischief of ye Indian drunkenness.” The fine of 10s. imposed upon a penniless Narragansett, and his

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(1) By the colonial law none but an innkeeper could sell wine or spirits, Williams not being such, could not sell wine, etc., even as a medical prescription, without a special license.

(2) Narr. Club Pub., VI. 296.

(3) R. I. Col. Records, I. 279, (A. D. 1654).

(4) See also R. I. Col. Records, I. 307-308, 330, 331, 335, 338, (A. D. 1655).



being whipped or "laide necke and heels," were not more efficacious.<sup>1</sup> His thirst, once excited, was not easily allayed. Under the Earl of Warwick's charter, the Town Meetings supplemented the colonial statutes, by enactments of their own. Providence Town Meeting, June 24, 1655, Mr. R. Williams, moderator. \* \* It was "ordered that if any sell to any Indian, a gallon of wine or liquors either directly or indirectly, he shall forfeit six pounds, one half to the informer, the constable, and his aid, and the other half to the Town Treasury." The Narragansett of those days was subjected to a rule which might well have perplexed profounder students of constitutional law. He was required to obey two sovereignties at once—that of his own sachem, and also that of the intruding Englishmen, who first sold him their liquors, and then whipped him for drinking them. The "Indian drunkenness" had already become a public danger. The teachings of Williams and his example, were wasted both upon colonists and Indians. The moral elevation of the Narragansetts became hopeless and nothing was clearer to the most ordinary foresight, than the approaching destruction of the tribe.

To conclude this mention of the obstacles to the civilization of the Narragansetts, some account must be taken, of the "murtherous English" "the desperate English," as Williams styles the early "border ruffians" of New England.<sup>2</sup> These lawless outcasts, were equally a danger to the Indian and to the Englishman. In the midst of an old society, and with exaggerated notions of the morals of those early days we find it difficult to believe that there were then in New England, outlaws hanging upon the outskirts of civilization, holding their possessions by what Sir William Blackstone calls "the robust title by occupancy," subsisting by theft and by illicit trade with both Indians and English, and proving that they were no respecters of persons by the impartial robbery of

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(1) A. D. 1655.

(2) See Williams's letters, Narr. Club Pub., VI. 111. Key, p. 110. Gookin, in Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., 1st series, I. 210.

both. The early records of these colonies preserve instances of their outrages and murders among the Indians—the crimes then perpetrated being equal in atrocity to any of the present day. Sometimes these fugitives joined the Indians, and adopted their barbarous manners.<sup>1</sup> After a crime perpetrated by some of these, Williams writes to Gov. Winthrop (August, 1638,)<sup>2</sup> mentioning the continual alarm. “There hath been great hub-bub in all these parts, as a general persuasion that the time was come of a general slaughter of natives, by reason of a murder committed upon a native within twelve miles of us, by four desperate English.” The dread by which the Indians were possessed, of outrages upon themselves, produced an equal alarm among the settlers. The distrust always existing between unassimilated and alien races easily led to apprehensions of a general massacre. This was the primitive form of panic in the Providence Plantations both among English and Indians. They were not much moved by the rise and fall of beaver, or by the fluctuations of wampumpeag. But now there was good reason for alarm, for, says Williams, (August 14, 1638),<sup>3</sup> “the natives, friends of the slain had consultation to kill an Englishman in revenge.” As of late on our western frontier, the resentment of the Indians endangered every whiteman within their reach. The barbarous notion of the individual responsibility of every member of a tribe, for the acts of every other, led to as gross crimes in revenge. Says Williams at a later day,<sup>4</sup> “the Nayantic Sachems resolve that for so many lives as are taken away by the English, or the Mohegans and Pequots with them, they will take revenge on Mr. Throckmor-

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(1) See Williams's letter of Jan. 10, 1637-8. Narr. Club Pub., VI. 84-85, also p. 66 for some account of one William Baker, who “is turned Indian,” goes naked, etc. See also Williams's letter to Gov. Leverett, Jan. 14, 1675, (p. 379 of the same), concerning Joshua Tift, a renegade Englishman.

(2) Narr. Club Pub., VI. 110, 111.

(3) Key, pp. 116, 117.

(4) Letter to Winthrop, July 21, 1640. Narr. Club Pub., VI. 138.

ton at Prudence, or Mr. Coddington &c., or Providence or elsewhere."<sup>1</sup> There was no improvement as years went on. The story is repeated with a change of names, by the "border ruffians" of the western frontier. Two centuries ago, their predecessors made New England insecure, and thwarted every effort to gain the confidence of the native race. Massachusetts dealt sternly with all such. That excellent old institution, the gallows, did a salutary work among them. Rhode Island had not a government strong enough to copy her example and the "outlying plantations" suffered the penalty of a government too free, or too weak for the times.

If in the midst of this barbarism, Williams looked about him for aid in his benevolent work, he gained from his own people little more than he did from Massachusetts. No other man in the Plantations save Benedict Arnold, could speak the language of the Narragansetts.<sup>2</sup> At best the settlers conversed with the Narragansetts in a jargon of English and Indian which served for the purpose of beggary or trade. The small religious society which Williams had founded, does not appear to have felt any interest in his work, or to have been in any way a partaker in it. Those who left it, became equally unfriendly to him, and to each other. They had other questions which seemed more interesting. Williams had, we may believe, no aid from Richard Scott, who has assured us of his personal dislike for him in his letter to George Fox,<sup>3</sup> and very little from William Harris, his life-long antagonist touching the proprietary estate. Sectarian antipathies, especially bitter in that age, prevented any union for the benefit of the Narragansetts. Gorton was the only other old planter who felt an interest in their welfare, and his peculiar theories precluded any coöperation with his former

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(1) See also Williams to Winthrop, Dec. 10, 1649, Narr. Club Pub., VI. 188. Concerning murders by Englishmen or natives, citations might be multiplied.

(2) So late as 1652, his difficulties were not removed. See his "Bloody Tenent yet more Bloody.," Narr. Club Pub., IV. 371-72.

(3) "New-England fire-brand quenched." Appendix.

adversary. The obscurity of Gorton's style, made him sufficiently unintelligible to Englishmen, and gave erroneous ideas of his doctrine to ignorant Indian hearers.<sup>1</sup> Some of the Massachusetts Indians went to Prudence and Warwick, and heard Gorton's preaching, an account of which they gave to Eliot or to his friends. They thought that Gorton was opposed to all government or magistracy whatsoever. Probably they had only learned his views of the old voluntary compact before the first charter. The magistrates of Massachusetts would gladly have thwarted any purposes of his. At a later day,<sup>2</sup> the Quakers felt little interest in the Indians except as partakers in their trade. Their sympathies were confined to their own society, and they dissuaded all alike from listening to any preachers but their own, as they only were partakers of the light within. They had some pretext for this in Massachusetts.<sup>3</sup> In Rhode Island, where they had experienced no ill usage, their interference with his labours provoked much of the rancour of Williams's controversial writing. He wrote thus to Throckmorton, one of the earliest and most vituperative of Fox's converts:<sup>4</sup>

"I heartily wish that your hands were washed from the bloody trade of Liquours to the Indians, which even the Quakers have practised, telling the Indians that the Quakers only know God, and therefore would sell them Powder and Liquors cheaper and they would not mix water with Rhum as others did; so that by many sudden deaths, what by Consumptions and Dropsies, the Barbarians have been murdered, hundreds if not thousands in the whole Countrey, and more in this colony than in any other part of the countrey beside that I have heard of against which I have witnessed from Court to Court in vain."

This is a specimen of the controversial style popular in the seventeenth century in the "Towne Streete" and at the Town Mill. Against any undertaking of Williams, the "Foxians"

(1) Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., 3d series, IV. 135, 136, 137.

(2) 1674. Daniel Gookin, in Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., 1st series, I. 203.

(3) Gookin, (in Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., I. 202-3), says that the Quakers at Nantucket dissuaded the Indians from listening to Mayhew or from reading the Scriptures.

(4) "George Fox digg'd out." Narr. Club Pub. V. 33.

were especially bitter, and any contemptuous speeches of them, he could repay in kind, and with usury.

Thus unaided and alone, Williams went on in his benevolent endeavours. In earlier days, he had probably found in them, relief under a sense of injuries then recent and grave, and in after years, a refreshment amid the controversies with his brother freeholders which disquieted his later life. He could only prosecute the work at intervals of rest from labours for his daily bread, and during his monthly visits to his trading-house at Narragansett. Having no assistants he could establish no school for training up a new and better generation of young Narragansetts, to be in turn the teachers of their fellows. We have no description of his methods. Everything of this sort is but conjecture. His beliefs were less stern and ironbound than those of his Puritan neighbours, but still they were far enough above the moral level of his hearers. He gained their goodwill by protecting them from injustice, and by attentions in their sickness and suffering. For example, in August,<sup>1</sup> 1651, he wrote to Gov. Winthrop of Connecticut for medicines and plasters, for the Indians. He had some medical books, and knew how to prescribe ordinary remedies. By his disinterested friendship which they all acknowledged,—seeking neither plunder nor annexation, he gained an influence over the Narragansetts, such as few other men have established over an Indian tribe.

In the seventeenth century the English had but newly begun their dealings with barbarous races. Many believed that these would recognise the superiority of Christian civilisation when it was presented to them, and accept its teachings. Williams, in some degree shared in this opinion, and was more hopeful of speedy success than men engaged in such enterprises are wont to be at the present day. His sanguine temperament at first misled him. He thought that Indians were anxious for light and truth, when their chief desire was for English knives, fishing-lines, and hardware. He was ready to introduce these,

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(1) Probably August. Narr. Club Pub., VI. 213.



and many more such things among them, for he knew that outward comfort and decency must be secured, before the moral and intellectual life can be begun. He met with an early disappointment in one of the first reforms which he urged upon the Narragansetts. It would seem that in a climate which produces December like ours, no great length or depth of argument would be required, to persuade men and women to wear clothes. But beyond this, it was the first step towards decency of life and conduct, which were but too little esteemed among the Narragansetts. They early seized upon this as the most characteristic difference between themselves and the English. It was not the colour of the skin, or the use of fire arms which distinguished them from the "coat-men" or "clothed" men from beyond the sea.<sup>1</sup> Until he could accomplish this, little else could be done. Williams more than once refers to this subject briefly, but in such pointed and emphatic terms, as prove that without this first lesson, nothing, he believed could be taught of Christian cleanliness of living.<sup>2</sup> He was not prepared for the obstinacy with which the Narragansetts rejected the ordinary comforts of civilisation. Probably they found it easier to force their way through swamps and thickets, and to make stealthy approaches to their game or their enemies, in the old national costume.<sup>3</sup> But even after they had fire arms and better pathways, they persisted in it, and did not even appreciate the capacious pockets which afforded such convenient receptacles for stolen goods. So long as their tribal existence lasted, they clung to their old habits, and with them kept their grossness and their vices. They appreciated English arms, boats, iron ware and trinkets, but nothing could persuade the Narragansetts to any change in their moral or social habits.

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(1)Key, p. 65.

(2)See his letter to Gen. Court of Mass., Oct. 5, 1654. Narr. Club Pub., VI. 276.

(3)Even the few who had been taught to wear white men's clothes, took them off, and covered them up, when it rained, and put them on again when the weather became dry. Key, p. 108.



So it was in all other things. By the influences which have been described, all efforts for the civilisation of the Narragansetts were wholly thwarted. The conduct and example of too many of the whitemen with whom they were<sup>1</sup> in contact, counteracted all moral teaching. The settlers cared little about the Indians, save with a view to their own profit, or their own safety. With their ample supply of "strong waters," they began unconsciously but effectively, the extermination of the native race. Quaker, Baptist, and Antinomian—men of all opinions or of none, were rivals, as they thought in trade, but really in extirpation. They began to redress the inequality of power so soon as they had gained a foothold on the soil.

Against all these hostile forces, Williams still cherished his hopes, and was but slowly undeceived. Even those in Massachusetts who had attempted similar work, saw his failure with complacency, and were content to ascribe it to his heretical opinions. Eliot seems to have thought that it was because he worked on the first day of the week.<sup>2</sup> Eliot asked a Narragansett Sachem, "why they did not learn of Mr. Williams, who had lived among them divers yeers?" He answered that they did not care to learn of him because "hee is no good man but goes out and workes upon the Sabbath day." Those who have read anything of the real acts and characters of the inferior Narragansett Sachems, will feel little doubt that this was merely a pretended reason given by some fawning sycophant, who sought to gain favour or a gratuity.

How long Williams persevered, we are not informed. But at length he began to lose the hopefulness of his earlier years. The Narragansetts listened quietly and decorously to him, as they would not to any Puritan missionary. He made friends but not believers. Neither Williams nor any other has recorded the fact that a single Rhode Island Indian was a con-

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(1) Gookin, in Mass. Hist. Soc. Pub., 1st series, I. 210.

(2) See "Bloody Tenent yet more Bloody," in Narr. Club Pub., IV. 373; also note citing p. 31 of Shepard's "Clear sun-shine." Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., 3d series, IV. 61, 135, 136, 137.

vert to Christianity.<sup>1</sup> The enthusiasm of his earlier writings declined, as his prospects faded away. Unsupported and discouraged, he abandoned the work as hopeless. He saw the barbarism and indecency of the Narragansetts as they really were, and the gulf of two thousand years which parted them from the Englishmen of his day. He could not teach them truthfulness—the first virtue of civilisation. In April,<sup>2</sup> 1649, he wrote: “I believe nothing of any of the barbarians on either side, but what I have eye sight for, or English testimony.” His conviction of their treachery grew stronger as years went on.<sup>3</sup> At last, in 1665, he gave utterance to his despair, in language not unlike that of Church, describing them as a “barbarous scum and offscourings of mankind.”<sup>4</sup> Fifty years went by, before any one took up the burden where Williams had laid it down.

Besides his benevolent works, Williams assumed political duties which he never abandoned to the end of his days. He was ever mindful of the safety and peace of his Plantations. He alone could conduct an interview with the Narragansetts, or allay their irritation when they felt aggrieved. His influence with Canonius and his successors, he used to the uttermost for the security of New England, as well as of his own people. He was better qualified for this than for any other work,—appearing at his best in his dealings with the Narragansetts, and at his worst in his controversies with his own Townsmen in the Proprietary meetings. His courage was of the highest order, and he had need of it soon after his arrival at Mooshassuc. His neighbors were “a frontier people.”<sup>5</sup> “Upon the express

(1)Gookin, in Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., 1st series, I. 210. “God hath not yet honoured him, or any other in that colony that I can hear of, with being instrumental to convert any of those Indians.” Also Bentley’s “Salem,” in Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., 1st series, VI. 250.

(2)Narr. Club Pub., VI. 177.

(3)Letter, Oct. 5, 1654. Narr. Club Pub., VI. 274, 276.

(4)See R. I. Col. Records, II. 135–38. Letter to Sir Robert Carr, March 1, 1665. Callender’s Hist. discourse, A. D. 1739, p. 139.

(5)See letter to Gen. Court of Mass., Nov. 15, 1655. Narr. Club Pub., VI. 296.

advice of your ever honored Mr. Winthrop, deceased, I first adventured to begin a plantation among the thickest of these barbarians."<sup>1</sup> Though he had little to expect from the gratitude of Massachusetts, he hazarded his life, to prevent a league between the Narragansetts and the Pequots, and to establish a firm alliance between them and the English.<sup>2</sup> The colony of Massachusetts "used him as instrumental to the peace, and speeding of the English planting in this country." No event in our early history exhibits higher courage and wisdom, than does the journey of Williams, unarmed and alone, into the midst of the excited Pequots who were labouring with all their savage arts of persuasion, to draw the Narragansetts into war. During three days and nights, his life was not for a moment secure. "The Pequots," says Williams, "who sought the Narragansetts' league against the English had almost ended my life and work together." The moral force of civilisation here gained its first victory over the native barbarism. The Narragansetts had not long to wait, before they had reason to rejoice that they had listened to his friendly counsel. During the gloomy years which followed, until the towns were united under the Earl of Warwick's charter, (A. D. 1647), Williams acted upon his own responsibility and judgment, with no advice or support from within or from without the colony, during the most gloomy apprehensions of savage war.<sup>3</sup>

"I have been more or less interested and used in all your great transactions of war and peace, between the English and the natives, and have not spared purse, nor pains nor hazards, (very many times), that the whole land, English and natives, might sleep in peace securely."<sup>4</sup>

In their disunited condition, before the first charter, the towns could devise no measures of safety, or defence. After the Pequot war, through the authority of Canonicus, the influence

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(1) Letter to Gen. Court of Mass. Oct. 5, 1654. Narr. Club Pub., VI. 269.

(2) See letter of Oct., 1651, p. 231.

(3) Williams to Gen. Court of Mass., Oct. 5, 1654. Narr. Club Pub., VI. 269, 270.

(4) Narr. Club Pub., VI. 269-70.

of Williams, and the ignorance of the Indians that the men of the Plantations were banished<sup>1</sup> and unsupported, they enjoyed tolerable quiet until 1643. The enmity of Massachusetts and her greed of territory, made her government reckless of any means which might be employed against the feeble colony on Narragansett Bay, and had well nigh brought it to a premature end. Zeal for sound doctrine kept equal pace with a hankering after the property of others. Winthrop says candidly,<sup>2</sup> "the place," (Warwick), "was likely to be of use to us," "for an outlet into the Narragansett Bay." It was intolerable that any stranger on their borders should possess a tract which would be valuable to the magistrates. The elders were equally scandalised that it should be in the hands of one who interpreted the Scriptures in a sense different from their own. It was therefore determined in Boston, with admirable logic, to bring Gorton to trial, for misunderstanding the prophecies, and to seize upon his property as a preliminary proceeding. The invasion of Warwick, the arrest of Gorton, and the spoiling of his goods were disastrous in ways other than those which had been foreseen. The prisoners were carried by Boston officers, through the "Towne Streete" of Providence, with every circumstance of insult to its jurisdiction. Worse than this, the Indians now saw the facts as they really were. The inferior Sachems and the baser class among their subjects had been appalled at the murder of Miantonomo. They stood in awe of the power which had struck down the great Sachem of the Narragansetts, and they made haste to court its protection. The blow was, (on a second thought), a fortunate one for themselves. They knew that if they could get rid of the grant to Gorton, Massachusetts would gladly stand in his place. They knew also, who could give the best gratuities on a new purchase, and who could secure them impunity for their thefts.<sup>3</sup> In 1643, Soco-nonoco and Pomham desired to be received under the jurisdic-

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(1) Compare page 95, *ante*.

(2) Savage's "Winthrop," II. 102.

(3) Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., 3d series, I. 111.

tion of Massachusetts.<sup>1</sup> Gorton, who had ample opportunity to study their characters, says that they were mere cattle thieves.<sup>2</sup> Their whole conduct proves that they were ready tools, at the service of any one who would pay their price. The first fruit of their intrigues with Massachusetts was her endeavour to oust Gorton from his purchase. The effect was two fold. Canonical and the more honourable Sachems, who equally appreciated and feared the boldness and the power of Massachusetts, and who knew that she would shrink from no measures to attain her ends—made haste to place themselves and their territory under the protection of the English crown.<sup>3</sup> The lower and baser Indians saw in the weakness of Mooshassue and Warwick an opportunity for robbery and insult, and believed that Massachusetts would abet or protect them in their outrages upon the Plantations. The appeal of Chad Brown, and the chief citizens of Providence—no admirers of Gorton—to the government of Massachusetts,<sup>4</sup> is as bold in tone as its authors judged to be prudent. Its suppressed indignation manifests a deep sense of the danger thus recklessly brought upon a whole community, and exhibits the result of the aggression in the light of Christian morals. Their apprehensions were justified by events. The insolence of the Indians, and their depreda-

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(1) See Callender's Hist. Discourse, p. 90, (Elton's ed.), R. I. Hist. Soc. Coll., v. 4.

(2) See Gorton's 2d letter, Winslow's "Hypoerisie unmasked," p. 32.

(3) August 19, 1644, R. I. Col. Records, I. 134-36. See also Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., 3d series, I. 11, Randall Holden's letter to the government of Massachusetts, Sept. 15, 1643. The Indians thought they would be upheld by Massachusetts in their crimes against Rhode Island men.

(4) Staples's Gorton, R. I. Hist. Soc. Coll., II. 105.

(5) The Indians believed that Massachusetts would not be displeased with the destruction of Warwick. Some people of "the Bay" encouraged the Indians against Gorton and told them that the Gortonians were not Englishmen. (See Staples's Gorton, pp. 153, 263, 267-68; also Randall Holden's letter to government of Massachusetts, Sept. 15, 1643, in Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., 3d series, I. 11).

The Indians boasted that they would be upheld by Massachusetts in robbery and outrages against the settlers. The local Sachems who had been hitherto friendly now began to prove the value of their good words.



vert to Christianity.<sup>1</sup> The enthusiasm of his earlier writings declined, as his prospects faded away. Unsupported and discouraged, he abandoned the work as hopeless. He saw the barbarism and indecency of the Narragansetts as they really were, and the gulf of two thousand years which parted them from the Englishmen of his day. He could not teach them truthfulness—the first virtue of civilisation. In April,<sup>2</sup> 1649, he wrote: “I believe nothing of any of the barbarians on either side, but what I have eye sight for, or English testimony.” His conviction of their treachery grew stronger as years went on.<sup>3</sup> At last, in 1665, he gave utterance to his despair, in language not unlike that of Church, describing them as a “barbarous scum and offscourings of mankind.”<sup>4</sup> Fifty years went by, before any one took up the burden where Williams had laid it down.

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(2)Narr. Club Pub., VI. 177.

(3)Letter, Oct. 5, 1654. Narr. Club Pub., VI. 274, 276.

(4)See R. I. Col. Records, II. 135–38. Letter to Sir Robert Carr, March 1, 1665. Callender’s Hist. discourse, A. D. 1739, p. 139.

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(1) Letter to Gen. Court of Mass. Oct. 5, 1654. Narr. Club Pub., VI. 269.

(2) See letter of Oct., 1651, p. 231.

(3) Williams to Gen. Court of Mass., Oct. 5, 1654. Narr. Club Pub., VI. 269, 270.

(4) Narr. Club Pub., VI. 269-70.

of Williams, and the ignorance of the Indians that the men of the Plantations were banished<sup>1</sup> and unsupported, they enjoyed tolerable quiet until 1643. The enmity of Massachusetts and her greed of territory, made her government reckless of any means which might be employed against the feeble colony on Narragansett Bay, and had well nigh brought it to a premature end. Zeal for sound doctrine kept equal pace with a hankering after the property of others. Winthrop says candidly,<sup>2</sup> "the place," (Warwick), "was likely to be of use to us," "for an outlet into the Narragansett Bay." It was intolerable that any stranger on their borders should possess a tract which would be valuable to the magistrates. The elders were equally scandalised that it should be in the hands of one who interpreted the Scriptures in a sense different from their own. It was therefore determined in Boston, with admirable logic, to bring Gorton to trial, for misunderstanding the prophecies, and to seize upon his property as a preliminary proceeding. The invasion of Warwick, the arrest of Gorton, and the spoiling of his goods were disastrous in ways other than those which had been foreseen. The prisoners were carried by Boston officers, through the "Towne Streete" of Providence, with every circumstance of insult to its jurisdiction. Worse than this, the Indians now saw the facts as they really were. The inferior Sachems and the baser class among their subjects had been appalled at the murder of Miantonomo. They stood in awe of the power which had struck down the great Sachem of the Narragansetts, and they made haste to court its protection. The blow was, (on a second thought), a fortunate one for themselves. They knew that if they could get rid of the grant to Gorton, Massachusetts would gladly stand in his place. They knew also, who could give the best gratuities on a new purchase, and who could secure them impunity for their thefts.<sup>3</sup> In 1643, Soco-nonoco and Pomham desired to be received under the jurisdic-

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(1) Compare page 95, *ante*.

(2) Savage's "Winthrop," II. 102.

(3) Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., 3d series, I. 111.

tion of Massachusetts.<sup>1</sup> Gorton, who had ample opportunity to study their characters, says that they were mere cattle thieves.<sup>2</sup> Their whole conduct proves that they were ready tools, at the service of any one who would pay their price. The first fruit of their intrigues with Massachusetts was her endeavour to oust Gorton from his purchase. The effect was two fold. Canonius and the more honourable Sachems, who equally appreciated and feared the boldness and the power of Massachusetts, and who knew that she would shrink from no measures to attain her ends—made haste to place themselves and their territory under the protection of the English crown.<sup>3</sup> The lower and baser Indians saw in the weakness of Mooshassuc and Warwick an opportunity for robbery and insult, and believed that Massachusetts would abet or protect them in their outrages upon the Plantations. The appeal of Chad Brown, and the chief citizens of Providence—no admirers of Gorton—to the government of Massachusetts,<sup>4</sup> is as bold in tone as its authors judged to be prudent. Its suppressed indignation manifests a deep sense of the danger thus recklessly brought upon a whole community, and exhibits the result of the aggression in the light of Christian morals. Their apprehensions were justified by events.<sup>5</sup> The insolence of the Indians, and their depreda-

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(1) See Callender's *Hist. Discourse*, p. 90, (Elton's ed.), *R. I. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, v. 4.

(2) See Gorton's 2d letter, Winslow's "Hypocrisy unmasked," p. 32.

(3) August 19, 1644, *R. I. Col. Records*, I. 134-36. See also *Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, 3d series, I. 11, Randall Holden's letter to the government of Massachusetts, Sept. 15, 1643. The Indians thought they would be upheld by Massachusetts in their crimes against Rhode Island men.

(4) Staples's Gorton, *R. I. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, II. 105.

(5) The Indians believed that Massachusetts would not be displeased with the destruction of Warwick. Some people of "the Bay" encouraged the Indians against Gorton and told them that the Gortonians were not Englishmen. (See Staples's Gorton, pp. 153, 263, 267-68; also Randall Holden's letter to government of Massachusetts, Sept. 15, 1643, in *Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll.*, 3d series, I. 11).

The Indians boasted that they would be upheld by Massachusetts in robbery and outrages against the settlers. The local Sachems who had been hitherto friendly now began to prove the value of their good words.

tions upon the English settlers, exceeded all former example. They were now first aware that the Plantations had no friends. Their attitude became reserved and threatening. After 1643 there is little farther mention of the "love" which Williams fancied that the Indians bore him when they sold Mooshassuc and Acquetneck. Thenceforth they are chiefly the authors of depredations and insults, which neither the colony nor its towns could prevent or punish. Their policy of conciliation was not more successful. The greater the deference shown to the Indians, the more exacting and arrogant they became.

To moderate the greed and passion of the lower Indians, there were now only the moral influence of Williams, and the authority of the great Sachem Canonieus. The seizure of Warwick, and the new light which he had gained respecting the weakness of his neighbours, did not move him to break the faith which he had pledged to them. He might have done it with impunity and with profit. The Boston theologians who had found reasons wherewith to satisfy the consciences of the magistrates, with the death of Miantonomo, could have found equally good ones to justify Canonieus in the repudiation of the grants to misbelievers, such as Williams and Gorton.<sup>1</sup> But against all hopes of favour or of money, the old barbarian kept his word. To the last, he restrained the inferior Sachems, who were too much in awe of him to withhold their accustomed obedience. During the brief remainder of his days, the quiet of Providence was undisturbed. The people knew that they were secure so long as his life lasted. Beyond it, they looked with gloomy forebodings, for the evil to come.

They had not long to wait. On a June day in 1647, the last real king of the Narragansetts was laid to rest. He was

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"The Massachusetts did maintain Puniham (a petty Sachem in this Province) twenty years against this colony and against his own chief Sachim;"—old Canonieus. Hutchinson's Coll., p. 415, reprinted in Prince Soc. ed., II. 143.

(1) Savage's Winthrop, II. 158, 1643. "Five of the most judicious [Boston] elders" advised that Miantonomo be put to death.

buried with all the state of the Narragansett ritual, and was probably (as he had requested) wrapped in a shroud from Mr. Williams's trading-house. It was the end of his "free gifts." The funeral honours of old Canonicus, Williams, who was probably a spectator, likens to those of Governor Winthrop. It was the last great assemblage of the Narragansetts. None of his successors commanded the same respect, either in life or death. Had any of them possessed their ancestor's forecast and self control, it is not probable that they could have long protracted the national existence of their people. But they might have saved it from the suffering of its latter days, and guided it to a peaceful and honorable close. No trustworthy tradition marks the old Sachem's grave. If it were known, it would be worthy of a monument commemorative of his faithful service. He shares with Sir Henry Vane, the claim to be esteemed the best friend of the colony in its early days, and should receive something of the regard which has been bestowed upon the barbaric passion and folly of Philip of Mount Hope.

Even before his death, the colonial legislature foresaw the beginning of a new *régime*. No coming Sachem could command the respect which had been possessed by Canonicus and Miantonomo. Their successors were fit only for a mere local ascendancy. No one of their kindred maintained an authority over the whole tribe. The inferior Sachems were of the class which the old chief despised, while he was forced to employ them. One of the earliest duties of the united towns was preparation for the dangers of the future. The early planters of Providence and Newport were sufficiently combative, and took measures for the public defence. They were familiar with the use of arms, which was one of the ancient rights of the English people. The Antinomians of Boston had furnished some of its chief military men. The disarming of their leaders (1637) bears testimony to the apprehensions awakened by the military qualities of some of them.<sup>1</sup> Many of the purchasers

(1) Hubbard's "General history," 2d series, Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., V. 298,

"Divers of the chief military officers of Boston had been favorers of the



of Acquetneck had been followers of Mrs. Hutchinson. Some of the settlers of Providence—as Gregory Dexter, etc.,—had seen military service.<sup>1</sup> Among the early cares of the townsmen was the formation of such companies, armed with pike and gun, as their narrow means would permit. The year of their organization under the first charter (1647) was a time of public distress, both from within and from without. Massachusetts would sell them no powder, and the Indians were menacing and contemptuous. The chapter on “Archery” in the Code of 1647,<sup>2</sup> is an admirable exhibition of courage and spirit under difficulties. Every one of military age was to be the possessor of bow and arrows, and children were to be instructed in their use. It was necessary to be on their guard, for no Sachem now received the respect of the whole tribe, or could restrain the drunken passions of his followers. An illustration of the new Indian *régime* was soon afforded.

After his grants to Williams, Gorton, and Coddington, Canonicus would admit no more settlers upon his domains. But in April, 1649, the startling rumour reached the Plantations, that one of the chief islands of the Bay had been sold to the Dutch West India Company. The Sachems had given no notice to the colony of their intention, and the proceeding was in violation of the order of the legislature, and of their own agreement.<sup>3</sup> All laws restraining a free sale of liquors and other injurious trade, became ridiculous if a foreign trading post could thus be established in the midst of Narragansett Bay, and supported by armed vessels from New Amsterdam. The colony,

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familistical persons and opinions,” &c. In other words, they were weary of the despotism of the Puritan ministers, and welcomed any form of dissent from it. See History of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, of Boston. Savage’s “Winthrop,” I. 256.

(1) See Williams’s letter to John Whipple, July 8, 1669. Narr. Club. Pub., VI. 328.

(2) R. I. Col. Records, I. 186. So early as 1645 Massachusetts refused to sell powder. Savage’s “Winthrop,” II. 211.

(3) Williams to Winthrop, April 15, 1649, Narr. Club. Pub., VI. 173.



which had no navigation until fifty years afterwards, could do nothing but renew its prohibition—which was a mere protest—against the Dutch trade.<sup>1</sup> Confidence in the Sachems was at an end. Williams had once<sup>2</sup> carefully discriminated between the better class of Narragansetts who had self-respect and a barbaric pride of character, and the lower and baser sort, from whom nothing could be expected. After this he includes all in the same censure, as alike treacherous and unworthy.

The sturdy resistance of Gorton to the injustice of Massachusetts, and the restitution to which its government was forced, had some effect in restoring to him the respect of the Sachems. But the continual attacks upon Rhode Island—its opinions, laws, and jurisdiction now made life and property everywhere uncomfortable, if not unsafe.

The history of these early years proves how groundless is the assertion that the founders of Rhode Island were protected by the Narragansetts. That they received Indian hospitality at a somewhat dear price, may be admitted. By protection we mean a more active interference in their behalf in time of peril, even to the extent of war, if necessary. The events to which we have referred, show that so far from intervention in behalf of the Rhode Island towns, the Narragansetts always stood in awe of Massachusetts, and were only anxious to secure themselves. When, if he ever meant to protect the planters of Warwick, Canonicus should have interfered or threatened—when his own territory was violated and his own grants set aside,—he made no demonstration, or remonstrance on behalf of Gorton, but hastened to seek a protectorate for himself and his subjects, from the only power which could overrule or check Massachusetts,—the English crown. The Narragansetts were prompt to answer at the beck and call of Massachusetts, whom they never ventured to disobey. Every act of despotism by Massachusetts over them proves that they could afford no protection

(1) R. I. Col. Records, A. D. 1647, I. 153; A. D. 1652, I. 243; A. D. 1654, I. 279.

(2) Key, pp. 27, 29.

or safety to those who dwelt within their bounds. They were mere spectators of the Pequot war—could not punish the murderers of Oldham or avenge the death of their own Sachem, Miantonomo. A few years later, they desired that they might not be “forced from their religion.” They never intimated to Massachusetts that any oppression or outrage towards Williams’s colony would be a *casus belli*, or deemed an injury to themselves. The only protector of Rhode Island was the English government.

After the failure at Warwick, Massachusetts made one more attempt to secure the Rhode Island territory for herself,—this time at Providence. In 1649, some of the purchasers of the Pawtuxet lands subjected themselves and their possessions to the jurisdiction of Massachusetts.<sup>1</sup> She readily accepted them, although they were beyond the boundaries of her patent. Among the Pawtuxet grantees were William and Benedict Arnold. There was probably some truth in what William Arnold had written to Massachusetts—that in Pawtuxet and Warwick the settlers were too few to over-awe the Indians, or to establish an efficient magistracy, and that the fugitives of the rest of the country come thither to be free from all restraint. Among the settlers of Pawtuxet was whatever could be found in Rhode Island of sympathy with the ideas of Massachusetts. But in their first purchasing of Williams his best lands, and then endeavouring to subvert the colony which had granted them, we find only a bad faith as discreditable as the conduct of the refugees whom they condemn. Massachusetts showed her usual zeal in enlarging her territory, and<sup>2</sup> sent citations from Boston to Rhode Island, directed to some of the neighbours of William Arnold and William Carpenter, the seceders of Pawtuxet, requiring them to answer their complaints in the courts of Massachusetts. Illegal as these proceedings were, they were eagerly adopted as the first steps toward the acqui-

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(1) Mass. Col. Records, III. 196-97.

(2) June 20, 1650.

tion of Narragansett Bay. The story may be read at large in Arnold and in the Colonial Records.<sup>1</sup> They were like, in purpose, to the attack upon Gorton nearly ten years before.<sup>2</sup> So grave was the situation that a special convention of delegates from all the Rhode Island towns was called by the President of the colony, to consider the invasion of its territory.<sup>3</sup> This second attack of Massachusetts was also unsuccessful. But the attempt (continued during several years) was highly injurious to the weaker colony. It tended to the subversion of all legal authority and social order. The Indians were no indifferent spectators of the proceedings. They hoped for a protectorate from the Bay which would shield them from the consequences of their depredations upon Rhode Island property. The weakness of the smaller colony was now fully understood, and disorders by the Narragansetts continued long after the original cause of them had gone by. A feeling of insecurity everywhere prevailed, and found expression both in private correspondence and in public acts. A few extracts from these may show the dangers and the spirit of those days. In May (23d) 1650, supplies of powder and magazines of arms proportioned to the population of the place were to be established in every town.<sup>4</sup> At the Town Meeting, November 3, 1655, "ordered that the matter of fortification against the barbarians be farther debated the next fourth day." They did debate it, but the poverty of the first generation precluded any effectual measures of public defence. Jan. 28, 1655-6, "Ordered that liberty be

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(1) See Arnold's Hist. R. I., I. 230, 231, 232.

(2) The government of "the Bay" sent peremptory orders to Rhode Island not to prosecute any suits against the Pawtuxet men who had renounced her jurisdiction, May 30, 1650, and threatened intervention if taxes were levied upon them.

(3) Providence Town Records, June 27, 1650, p. 142.

(4) R. I. Col. Records p. 223.

The town of Providence was a partaker in the general apprehensions. Town Records September 8, 1654. \* \* "Ordered that those farms which are one mile off the Towne shall have liberty to leave one man at home on training days."

given to so many as please to erect a fortification upon the Stampér's Hill or about their own houses." It was wise to make some provision for the safety of the Town Mill, where were at times considerable stores of grain. The founders thus foresaw the catastrophe of the town, twenty years before it came. This alarm was premature. The people were safer while their villages were mere trading posts, than they were after they had grown into communities large enough to excite the apprehensions of the Indians, but not large enough for their own defences.

It had been well if after seventeen years of service, in behalf of the peace of New England, Williams had not been forced to address the General Court of Massachusetts, in words like these :

"The Indians which pretend your name<sup>1</sup> at Warwick and Pawtuxet, (and yet live as barbarously if not more than any in the country) please you to know their insolencies upon ourselves and cattle (unto £20 damages per annum) are insufferable by English spirits,"—"please you to give credence that to all these, they pretend your name, and affirm that they dare not, (for offending you) agree with us, nor come to rules of righteous neighborhood, only they know you favor us not, and therefore sent us for redress unto you." The Indians "evade both" laws (i. e., that of Rhode Island, and that of Massachusetts), "under cover of your authority." "Whereas, I humbly conceive, with the people of this colony your commerce is as great as any in the country, and our dangers (being a frontier people to the barbarians) are greater than those of other colonies, and the ill consequences to yourselves would be not a few nor small, and to the whole land, were we first massacred or mastered by them. I pray your equal and favorable reflection upon that, your law, which prohibits us to buy of you all means of our necessary defence of our lives and families, (yea in this most bloody and massacreing time)."<sup>2</sup>

Williams had not found it impossible to live at peace among the Indians, and he strove in vain to induce the Government of the Bay, to refrain from stirring up their barbaric passions, and from refusing the means of defence against the evils

(1) Compare Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., 3d series, I. 11.

(2) Williams's letter, Nov. 15, 1655. Narr. Club Pub., VI. 293, 294, 296.

of which they had been themselves the authors. Gov. Winthrop had thought it an error to refuse the sale of a few barrels of powder yearly, to the outlawed colony. The narrow-minded men who succeeded him persevered in this thankless policy, long after his decease. The evil was remedied through the London agent of the colony, John Clarke.<sup>1</sup> Warwick was still the chief sufferer by Indian disorders, which went on unchecked.<sup>2</sup> Daily contact with barbarians did not tend to the improvement of either race. The *morals* of the Narragansetts reacted in some degree, upon their English neighbours.<sup>3</sup>

The Plantations of Providence during these years, were more fortunate than those of Warwick. The English settlers were more numerous, and they attempted some measures of relief and self defence. The Indian disturbances were but

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(1) R. I. Col. Records, Oct. 11, 1656. John Clarke, "procured and sent fower barrels of powder and eight barrels of shott and bullets for the use of the colony, and hath consigned them to our honoured President Mr. Roger Williams."

(2) Williams to Gen. Court, May, 12, 1656. Narr. Club. Pub., VI. 300, 301. "They have not been sparing of your name as the patron of all their wickedness against our Englishmen, women and children and cattle to the yearly damage of sixty, eighty and one hundred pounds." \* "Please you not to be insensible of the slippery and dangerous condition of this their intermingled cohabitation. I am humbly confident that all the English towns and plantations in New England, put together, suffer not such molestation from the natives as this one town and people. It is so great and so oppressive that I have daily feared the tidings of some public fire and mischief."

(3) Ibid, p. 300, 301.

"Our first request" "is for your favorable consideration of the long and lamentable condition of the Town of Warwick," \* \* "they are so dangerously and so vexatiously intermingled with the barbarians, that I have long admired the wonderful power of God, in restraining and preventing very great fires of mutual slaughter breaking forth between them." This is a view of Warwick Neck, in the summer of 1656. [Ibid, p. 301]. "This small neck (wherein they keep and mingle fields with the English) is a very den of wickedness, wherein they not only practice the horrid barbarisms of all kinds of whoredoms, idolatries, conjurations, but living without all exercise of actual authority, and getting store of liquors (to our grief), there is a confluence and rendezvous of all the wildest and most licentious natives and practices of the whole country."



trivial. In the northern part of the colony, the natives were few and widely separated. Their controversies arose chiefly from their cheating, drunkenness, and theft. There was no petty Sachem in the neighbourhood to embroil them with Massachusetts, and after the attempt upon Pawtuxet was at an end, the "Bay people" made no farther endeavours to gain possession of the territory. Yet there was reason to apprehend danger, in the vicinity of the Indians and the townsmen were careful to avoid giving them offence. The necessity of leaving one of the household at home on training days, (Town records, Nov. 8, 1654), must have been a severe privation when those were almost the only holidays of the year. At this time, a half hour's walk would carry any of the townsmen into the midst of scenes such as must recently have been sought on the western borders of Colorado. To avoid the perils of the neighborhood as well as the losses by their thefts, it was "ordered" by the Town of Providence, (January 27, 1657), "that no Indians sit down to inhabit in this Neck."<sup>1</sup> The communistic ideas of the Indians were as vigorously asserted as in Warwick. Wherever one of them found an uncultivated field, he built a wigwam, without asking permission of the owner of the freehold, and whatever he lacked for a livelihood he eked out from the gardens, barns and hencoops of his white neighbours. The prohibition was futile, for there was no civil force to give effect to it. At the same time, the townsmen were anxious that the Indians should have no reason to believe that justice was denied them, in the courts of the Englishmen. The Plantations were not as yet, strong enough to treat the natives as their subjects, and their habits of private revenge made it dangerous to punish them even for their crimes. The colony established only a court of appeals,—leaving it to the towns to set up and regulate their own local tribunals. In the same Town Meeting, which endeavoured to exclude the Indians from "the Neck," (January 27,

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(1) Before the division of Providence, that part of it lying between the Seekonk and the Mooshassuc, was styled in deeds and public documents "Providence Neck,"



1657), a court was instituted for the determination of controversies between Englishmen and Indians. It was of higher dignity than that which sufficed for differences between the Planters. Two or three freeholders, appointed by the Town Meeting, sufficed for the latter, while an Indian brawl over a fathom of wampumpeage, or a half gallon of rum, could only be adjudicated by a commission consisting of "the Town magistrates, and the General officers," i. e., the "assistants." The Indians were numerous enough, twenty years after the first planting of Mooshassuc, to obstruct all improvements in the northern and western woodlands.<sup>1</sup>

During all these dreary years, and in view of this ever present danger, the colony adopted such measures as it might, for the public security. For a considerable period this was thought to be assured by the firmness and goodwill of Canonieus, and by the moral ascendancy of Williams. But at an early day, the increasing debasement of the Narragansetts, through the unchecked trade in liquors required some provision against domestic violence. Throughout New England, a dread of the French and of their Indian allies led to military organization. In the seventeenth century, the English yeomanry were more familiar with arms than they have been, during more than a century and a half, under the restraint of the game-laws. The frequent enactments concerning arms and trainings<sup>2</sup> give evidence of a people not wanting in hardihood and skill, and in the jealousies incident to the military profession. The townsmen of Providence readily seconded the efforts of the colony for the public safety. Their purposes were wholly defensive, for their resources admitted no other.<sup>3</sup>

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(1) See Providence Records, 1657.

"Ordered that Arthur Jenner, Roger Mowice, Valentine Whitman and John Sayles be empowered to treat with the Indians that lay claim to the meadows of Lohusquassuck, and clear it for the Towne and that the above mentioned be accommodated therein."

(2) These may be read at large in R. I. Records, I and II; it is only necessary to refer to them here.

(3) June 4, 1655. At a Town Meeting "Roger Williams, Moderator" \*

In this unsafe condition, the colony went on during thirty years, from the death of Canonicus, to that of Philip of Mount Hope. A whole generation had done nothing to improve the moral condition of the Narragansetts. Good neighbourhood and peace had been preserved by the kindness and vigour of a few leading Englishmen. Williams saw, and confessed his failure. Legislation was not more successful. It increased in severity with the increase of property. This was nowhere safe, and a constant irritation was maintained, by the insolence of Indian marauders. The colonial act of 1659 recites the damage by Indians, stealing and pilfering, and their injuries to cattle, fences, fruit-trees and "corne houses." It imposes severe penalties no less, in some cases, than the sale of the offender into slavery in another colony.<sup>1</sup> It may be doubted whether this severe statute were ever enforced. It would have endangered an immediate rupture with the Narragansetts. In May 1659, a former law prohibiting the sale of liquors to any Indian was re-enacted and made more severe. This is one of the provisions :

\* \* "It is also ordered, that it shall be lawfull for any person in case they spie an Indian convayinge or havinge of liquors to seize of it for their owne proper use. It is further declared that Indian witness may not pass in the premises."<sup>2</sup>

But such penalties as whipping—in those days conscientiously administered,—were powerless to restrain the lawless acts of those who had only barbarian notions of property. The sense of insecurity by which the citizens were led to acquiesce in their military expenses, (the heaviest of all), had its influence upon colonial politics. It was necessary to resort to a measure

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"Ordered that the former way of training be still kept, on four times in the year, and the penalty for absence shall be two shillings, or nothing, as the General and Town officers, or chief commander in the band shall think meet."

(1) R. I. Col. Records, I. 412-13.

(2) Ibid. I. 414. Compare this with Williams's description of Warwick, p. 198, *ante.*, where the Indians had "store of liquors."

hitherto foreign to the policy of Rhode Island—an increase in the power and efficiency of the executive government.

The representative man of the new policy was not far to seek. Benedict Arnold, (born in England, Dec. 24, 1615), had been brought to Massachusetts, by his father, William Arnold, and accompanied him to Rhode Island. He was one of the first townsmen of Providence, and signed the agreement of 1636. He was early associated with Williams in his dealings with Canonicus and Miantonomo, and when but twenty-three years old, was a witness to Miantonomo's confirmation of the sale of Mooshassuc.<sup>1</sup> His intercourse with Williams may have facilitated his acquisition of the Narragansett tongue, or may have first awakened his interest, for they two, of all the settlers, attained any proficiency in it. Their early association may have given to Arnold some means of improvement and some enlargement to his thoughts. He had the same opportunity for studying the character and habits of the Narragansetts, and he profited by it to the end of his days. He was a partaker with his father, William Arnold, in the purchase of the Pawtuxet lands, and in the discreditable attempt, (by secession, and annexation to Massachusetts), to destroy the colony which had befriended them both.<sup>2</sup>

In the rough school of experience, he formed one of those vigorous characters which are native to a new soil, and it seems, had no great scruple in profiting by any opportunity which

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(1) R. I. Col. Records, I. 18, A. D. 1639. Benedict Arnold does not appear to have been associated with his father, William Arnold, in the religious society founded by Williams.

(2) B. Arnold joined with William Arnold in offering the Pawtuxet lands to Massachusetts, and inviting its protection. R. I. Col. Records, I. 218, 219. In 1649, letters were sent by the General Court of R. I. to B. Arnold, touching his submission to Massachusetts—the alarm was general. In 1648, he gave notice to Massachusetts of the proceedings of the Warwick men to secure themselves against annexation, (Savage's "Winthrop," II. 120-1-2-3.) and negotiated the submission of Pomham and Socononoko. In 1658, he was one of the purchasers of the Pettiquamscut tract, in the King's Province. In 1670, he was appointed to go to England, as agent, to defend the colony against the aggressions of Connecticut.

offered. Williams intimates that William Arnold had no real sympathy with the doctrines of Massachusetts. It appears, by the testimony of his neighbour Gorton, that Benedict Arnold was as broad in his views of Sunday-keeping, as were most of the early Rhode Islanders.<sup>1</sup> During the week, he looked after his fields; on Sunday he was at his trading house. This was the great market-day at Pawtuxet and Warwick. The Indians swarmed in from the surrounding country, with skins of beaver and otter, and found Arnold ready to deal in hardware, gunflints and other articles of Indian barter. He gave them his counsels together with his goods, and by "speaking his mind" freely, came to be regarded by them, as a great Sachem among the English, long before he was Governor. It is not necessary to believe that the day always ended with the sobriety which is esteemed befitting to it, but certainly there was no loss when the accounts of the establishment were balanced. All this his Puritan neighbours found it convenient to forget, when they were pressed in their diplomacy, with something more important than usual. They then sent to Rhode Island for Benedict Arnold, overlooking for the time, the fact, that his course of life would have subjected him to imprisonment, or at least to banishment, among themselves. In 1645, he bore a message from the United Colonies to the Narragansetts. He doubtless rendered valuable service in enforcing order among the lawless spirits, both English and Indian, who congregated in Warwick and Pawtuxet. The disfavour which must have rewarded those who had so long disquieted the colony by their attempt to destroy it, probably rendered his prospects uncertain. In 1653, he removed to Newport. The dislike prevailing among the islanders towards the settlers at Mooshas-sue, made them ready to overlook Arnold's proceedings for their disturbance, and he speedily regained the popularity which he had lost by secession. In 1654, he was elected an assistant

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(1) See Gorton's "Simplicities defence;" also Winslow's "Hypocrisy unmasked," p. 52.

of the colony, from Newport. The island then contained the great majority of the population—in 1655, two thirds of the whole. Providence was so divided by its controversies, that it counted for little in a colonial election. Affairs at Warwick, as former quotations prove, grew much worse after his departure, and Arnold was welcomed as an efficient member of the colonial administration. He presided as moderator at many legislative sessions, and after his accession to its council, a new and unwonted vigour appears in Indian affairs. He was still engaged in trade with the Narragansetts. After the failure of the Dutch attempt, Arnold, in conjunction with Coddington purchased Dutch Island of the Sachems, a proceeding which received the emphatic disapproval of the colonial commissioners in Nov., 1658.<sup>1</sup> Such was the value of his services that his fellow-citizens overlooked irregularities. In 1657 he was chosen President of the colony under the first charter, and held the office during five years.<sup>2</sup> With all its discouragements, by external hostility and its own dissensions, the colony had gained something in wealth and force, and it now adopted something of the bolder policy of its neighbours. When the new charter was brought over, and the government was at last set upon a permanent and stable foundation, with boundaries secure from farther invasion, it may perhaps be thought that the first to receive its honours would be one of those who had borne the chief of its burdens and sacrifices. Not so thought the men of those days. The first governor under the new *régime* was not Williams, nor the representative of any school of opinion which had divided the colony,—but Benedict Arnold, the old interpreter and trader, who, next to Williams, was best able to deal with the Narragansetts.<sup>3</sup> During seven years, before the war,

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(1) R. I. Col. Records, I. 403.

(2) In 1657-58, 1658-59, 1659-60, 1662-63.

(3) The list of officers named in the charter of Charles II, was probably made up in a legislative caucus, and forwarded to Clarke, in London, to be inserted in the charter. The names were all unknown to the men in power in England.



Arnold was governor under the new charter.<sup>1</sup> The years of his authority whether as governor or as a member of the council were years of peculiar anxiety. Whenever England was at war with France or Holland, (as in 1667), frequent alarms of Indian confederacies with French or Dutch, overspread the colonies. In Rhode Island, the Governor, Deputy Governor and assistants, were made a permanent council, to sit during the intervals of the legislative sessions, and to make orders respecting impending dangers.<sup>2</sup> They did not suffer their authority to rust in their keeping. A few citations will suffice to illustrate the new rule over the Narragansetts. Whenever an Indian panic now overspread the community, the suspected Sachems received peremptory orders to appear before the Governor and Council. In 1669, letters were received from the Governors of Connecticut and New York, and also from Major Mason, averring that "Ninecraft, the Niantic" and the Long Island Indians were plotting against the English, in combination with the French and Dutch,<sup>3</sup> and that Ninecraft had held a great dance, at which Philip of Mount Hope had been represented by seven of his chief men. The strong will and sound judgment of Benedict Arnold were best fitted for times like these. Ninecraft and other Sachems were ordered to appear before the Governor, etc., at Newport, Aug. 1669.<sup>4</sup> They obeyed, for the invitation came from a host who would take no denial—in fact, Ninecraft came under arrest. As the council was not satisfied with their answers, all the Town Councils were advised to set watches, to seize the arms of Indians,<sup>5</sup> to furnish the inhabitants with ammunition and to put the colony in a posture of defence. The year 1669 was one of especial disquiet, throughout the northern colonies. The danger passed away, in great part, through the

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(1) In 1663-64, 1664-65, 1665-66, 1669-70, 1670-71, 1671-72, and after the war, in 1677-78.

(2) R. I. Col. Records, II. 191-92, 197, A. D. 1667.

(3) Ibid., II. 267, Letter to Gov. Prince, July 22, 1669.

(4) Ibid., III. 281.

(5) Ibid., II. 264, 269, 281.



firmness of the Rhode Island Council. In times of panic, Gov. Benedict Arnold was not carried away by unfounded rumours, and knew how much importance was to be ascribed to Indian growls and threats. His opinion was esteemed in other colonies, and allayed apprehensions far beyond the limits of Rhode Island. Governor Lovelace, of New York, thus acknowledges his letter of the 29th of July, 1669, in a reply, of 24th of August :<sup>1</sup>

“I must render you my most particular thanks for those civilities you were pleased to afford me, in your freindly expressions; next I cannot but kindly resent that care you have showne in settling the myndes of some ouer credulous persons amongst us (who being possest with a panick feare), were apt to entertain very melancholly thoughts, according as they were instilled by the intelligence and informations of some fond Indians to the great disturbance of the publique peace, and by it animating the heathens who taking courage from our feare, might be apt to break forth into extravagances not to be redrest without a war and all the miseries attending it; but those apprehensions are now vanisht, and mens myndes by reason of your excellent lettre, well pacified and settled, neither do I believe they will too hastily againe, give credence to the information of a faithlesse and false generation.”<sup>2</sup>

The year 1671 saw a renewal of the general apprehensions. The Council consulted with Plymouth concerning their common safety, and<sup>3</sup> ordered a meeting for the safety of the Island,—disarming the Indians,—enquiry for arms and powder among the English—and required all arms to be repaired.

Through the firmness of the Rhode Island council, nothing occurred among the Narragansetts to excite alarm, until 1673. At the General Assembly in May,<sup>4</sup> it was

“Voted that the Governor, Deputy Governor,” \* \* \* [Wm. Harris and others] “are appointed and authorized” [to] “agree of some way to prevent the extreme excess of the Indians’ drunkennesse, that soe if possible such enormities as thereupon ensue may be prevented and the remedy attended

(1) R. I. Col. Records, II. 263, 264, 265, 276.

(2) Ibid., II. 263, 278.

(3) Ibid., II. 409-10, Aug. 31, 1671.

(4) Ibid., II. 486-87, 500.

unto, that soe peace and good order may be maintained. And also to consult of any other matter, that doe or may appear to be in difference between the Indians and concerninge this Collony."

The treaty with the Narragansetts was to be arranged at Newport, on the 24th of June. The Indians with whom the negotiations were to be held were Mausup and Ninecraft of Narragansett, Philip of Mount Hope, Wetamo of Pocassett, Awashanks of Seaconnett. But it was too late for the English to undo their own destructive work. The Indians would make no treaty, and legislative restraints upon traders were now unavailing.

In such occupations passed the long administration of Gov. Benedict Arnold. It is not necessary to believe that he was the author of all the public documents which bear his name, or that he would have signed some of them with equal readiness, had he anticipated the return with which the "Foxians" would requite the colony for its protection. There were other writers in the Plantations more literate than he, who could have upheld their principles with equal vigour. The times did not admit of the cultivation of the arts of peace. He was long maintained in office because he was conversant with the Indian character, and could do a work, to which more lettered contemporaries were unequal. His repeated elections gave a sense of security. His native force of will fitted him for the work of repression. This was but temporary and superficial. It did not reach, as Williams had aimed to do, the causes of existing evils, and was sure to be undone when the government passed into the hands of feebler successors.

The rule of Gov. Benedict Arnold was contemporaneous with the rise of a new sect, and party. The Antinomians of Newport, some of whom had been among the foremost men of Massachusetts, and who had there caused much apprehension by their military proficiency, were not inattentive to martial exercises in the early days of the town. The religious theories which they had learned from Mrs. Hutchinson in Boston, pre-

pared for a ready reception of the teachings of Fox, and his disciples. The oratory of the "Foxians" was attractive, and their meetings—furnishing an excitement which nothing else could there supply—met the want of popular entertainment like the camp-meetings of later days. Their influence spread from house to house until within a few years the chief town of the colony was under their control. Their denial of any coercive force in government and their theories of non-resistance had attractions for those also who had reasons of their own for avoiding any close scrutiny of their affairs. Some found in the doctrines of the Quakers a means of relief from training-days, and from taxation for the support of the militia. Thus, the popular majority of the island towns, which had absolute control of the colony, passed under the rule of men who would neither defend their own households nor suffer others to do it for themselves. As was usual in the 17th century, a prosperous sect, it became also a political party. The supporters of the policy of Gov. Arnold fell away. Men less resolute succeeded to his place, and in 1675, (May 4th), in full view of the dangers which encompassed it on every side, William Coddington was chosen Governor of the colony. He was now grown old, and his late writings would indicate that his faculties had fallen into decay. But nothing in his earlier life gave proof of statesmanship or of vigorous common sense. He showed no interest in the colony as a whole, but his sympathies were limited to the islands of the Bay. Under his influence, they had refused during several years, to unite with the main land under the Earl of Warwick's charter—their only political guaranty. Under the same leadership, the islands had seceded. With equal want of forecast, Coddington had rent the colony in twain, and had obtained a commission, by which he was set over the islands as Governor during his life. His selfish policy did not permit him to foresee, that England would not long suffer itself to be annoyed by colonies of such microscopie dimensions, or that it would not endure the encroachment upon its prerogative, of governors appointed

during life. Under the influence of Coddington, the colony came near in its youth to absorption by Massachusetts. After its permanence was secured, his attachments never reached beyond Newport. His former notions had prepared him to do as little as possible for the colony,—those of his later years—to do nothing at all. It was for this purpose that he was elected, and his supporters were not disappointed. Newport had from the beginning, felt little sympathy with the Towns of the Main land. She had but few Indians, and was little apprehensive of invasion from without. The “Foxians” in their character as a religious sect, controlled the legislative elections. The times were so strangely altered that in the midst of public dangers warlike preparations had fallen into disesteem, and measures for the common defence were discountenanced by the Government itself.

That the Narragansetts had been for some time aware of the changed policy of the colony may be inferred from the increasing complaints of their insolence and crimes, of the punishment of which they now felt little apprehension. A new generation had grown up, who knew nothing of Canonicus and his counsels of self-restraint and peace. The English despised the Sachems who succeeded him, and taught the inferior Indians the same lesson of disrespect.

Every safe-guard from their good will, or from their control over their subjects, was now gone. After forty years of contact with civilization, they had learned only its unhealthier lessons. After his efforts for their instruction had proved fruitless, Williams had done what he could, in the legislature and the Town Meetings, (where he was often moderator) to restrain the trade in spirits, and to preserve the public peace. In our day, we are accustomed to regard chiefly the effects of intemperance upon individuals and households. In the seventeenth century in Rhode Island, it threatened the existence of civilized society. In 1663, the Town Meeting of Providence, in a resolution making up in vigour of language what it wanted

in civil force, (July 3), denounced "the great abuse of selling liquors to Indians," and says, "not only particular persons are endangered, but the town in general." Finding themselves unable to punish the traders as public enemies, they prove their own weakness, by applying to them epithets which would be deemed indecorous in a public document of the present day. In 1669, (August 19), Williams wrote to Winthrop, referring to an encounter then recent, between Englishmen and Indians.<sup>1</sup>

"While you were at Mr. Smith's, that bloody liquor trade (which Richard Smith hath of old, driven), fired the country about your lodging. The Indians would have more liquor, and it came to blows," etc. "The Indians" \* "are more insolent with this repulse, yet they are willing to be peaceable, were it not for that devil of liquor."

He repeats his declaration that he "might have gained thousands (as much as any) by that trade, but God hath graciously given me rather to choose a dry morsel."<sup>2</sup> But Williams was now grown old and poor. He had no trading-house (since 1651), and could give no more gratuities. His influence with the younger Narragansetts was fading away.

They had learned little of the white man's arts of life. They were of small service to the farmers, and gained no popularity with their wives and families.<sup>3</sup> These found it impossible to teach them those lowly domestic arts, in which the negroes served their apprenticeship in the school of civilization. The Indian women could not be taught to wash English clothes, or to render any valuable domestic service.<sup>4</sup> The Indian servants, sometimes mentioned by Williams, appear to have been guides, messengers, scouts, and not domestics.<sup>5</sup> Such neighbours were a heavy burden. Indian notions of peace included little more than absti-

(1) Narr. Club Pub., VI., 332-33.

(2) *Ibid.*, p. 333.

(3) See Wood's "New England's prospect," (Prince Soc. ed.), p. 73.

(4) Perhaps the Indian women who did all the hard work of their own households, thought that this would only be an addition to burdens heavy enough already.

(5) Williams to Winthrop, July 10, 1637. Narr. Club Pub., VI. 37. R. I. Col. Records, 37, 40, May 22, 1649.



nence from torch and tomahawk. They were always prowling about the English villages, and, said Chad Brown,<sup>1</sup> "stole whatever they could lay their hands on." The housewife of those days, after hanging up the family washing in the sun, had too often the vexation of discovering that she had bestowed her labours, only that an Indian vagabond might sell the domestic habiliments to an unlicensed dealer in strong drink. An Indian peace was nearly as bad as a white man's war.

While all this was going on, Newport was apparently secure in her insular position, and felt little interest in the mainland towns, to which she had been united against her will. Perhaps the only feeling which the people of Mooshassuc and of Acquetneck had in common, was that of cordial dislike. The new religious party which bore sway in Newport, had its representatives in Providence. The "Plantations" had from the first, given full indulgence to the spirit of controversy. Townsmen were obstinate and contentious. Sectarian debates excluded healthier studies. The proprietors and the freeholders waged a lifelong war. Dissensions which interrupted private friendships diverted all thoughts from education, and from the improvements which would have attracted valuable emigrants, and thus have given strength to the town. And now a controversy was added, as to the proper mode of conducting the Indian affairs of the colony. The one party—that of Williams—maintained the old position, of firm but kindly dealing with the Narragansetts—with a competent military force to check or to over-awe them—and a politic waiting for events. The other party taught the abandonment of all force for the protection of civil society, while in practice, they prosecuted the same trade as their neighbours, and did nothing for the safety of the state. With all these evils uncorrected or increasing, the people were less observant of them than they had been, twenty or ten years before. They had waited so long for the evil day, that they seem to have persuaded themselves

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(1) Ms. of his son James Brown, in R. I. Hist. Soc. Library.



that it would never come. All this while, they were encompassed by barbarians as well armed, and more numerous than themselves. With a colonial government which abandoned them to their fate, with no fortified places sufficient for the shelter of their families, with a country covered with forests concealing marauders and assassins,—the houses built of wood and the whole property of the Plantations exposed in the fields, they could only indulge the Indians, or pacify them, at whatever expense.

Such a social condition had its natural limit. It could endure only so long as there was territory enough for the concurrent action of two opposite social systems. The old migratory habits of the Narragansetts—their settling upon and temporarily cultivating any piece of ground which pleased their fancy—were of less importance while the Englishmen were few, and had as yet ample room for their permanent and hereditary homesteads. But so soon as their increase of numbers made these conflicting schemes of life impossible, it was certain that there would be a collision ending only in the destruction of the feebler race. One of the most frequent questions which the Indians had asked of Williams was,<sup>1</sup> “Why come the Englishmen hither?” It was now receiving its answer from every part of New England. The villages of the strangers were appropriating the favorite resorts of the Narragansetts and Wampanoags, and enclosing the choicest meadow lands of the Connecticut valley. After the settlement of Rhode Island, the Indian industries seem to have declined. When they could purchase fire arms, fishing apparatus, vessels of earthen ware, and utensils of iron, they had no farther need of bows, of flint arrowheads, or of stone mortars slowly and laboriously wrought and fashioned by their own hands. They needed only a few days added to their hunting, to gain sufficient supply of skins for the English trading-houses. But now the sawmills and gristmills of the settlers were invading the haunts of the beaver

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(1)Key, p. 65. 1642.

and the otter, and destroying the ancient fisheries. New highways were piercing the forests, and disturbing the best coverts for game. There was a sad diminution of the supplies for a barbarian mode of life, and the Narragansetts would learn no new one from their English neighbours. Worse than all, the proprietors of the "Plantations" had, in 1665, established their famous old boundary—"the seven-mile line."<sup>1</sup> To the westward of it, a new class of small freeholders was now springing up. From month to month the Indians saw Thomas Olney, and other "proprietors' surveyors," whom from their dignified offices and occupations, they may well have regarded as the chief priests of the Plantations, entering upon their ancient woods, and brooks, and cornlands. These with field-book, chain and compass, amid the profound interest of the beholders, uttered mysterious words, and laid down boundary lines, squares and angles, with such magical effect, that thenceforth no Indian, and only one white man could ever dwell upon that part of their tribal property again. The like admonitions came from the upper waters of the Blackstone. Everything indicated that if the Narragansetts hoped to retain even a foothold upon their own soil, they should postpone or suppress their tribal hatreds, and act speedily, for the day of the Indians was drawing to its end. As the irritation of the tribes increased, so also did the restraints imposed by the growing power of the English. The New England colonies were often calling the Sachems to explain their conduct, and thwarting their purposes of revenge. It was foreseen that this could not last much longer, and that nothing was wanting but a leader and an occasion to enwrap the whole community in a flame.

The conflagration was at last kindled, not by the Narragansetts, but by the Wampanoags. Though inferior in num-

(1) Providence Town Meeting. February 19, 1665. "The north line beginning at the bound set, seven miles from Fox's hill west, and so to run north to Pawtucket River," was ordered to be run. John Whipple, Arthur ffenner, and Thomas Harris, Senr. were appointed a committee to run the line.

bers, they were the more active and enterprising, and had been subjected to more rough and peremptory treatment than Rhode Island could venture to employ with the Narragansetts. They had not disguised their resentment, and during several years had been objects of a suspicion which they repaid in full measure.<sup>1</sup> Rumours of wars projected by Philip were not infrequent. The chief no longer showed a compliant temper. He refused to meet the Governor of Plymouth, but "stood upon his guard, with his armed barbarians," and, says Williams, "Taunton, Swanzy, Rehoboth and Providence stood upon ours." The respect for his father's friend yet lingered, and Philip promised to meet the Governor, if Williams could be present as a mediator. He consented. The Governor and the Sachem met. Philip disclaimed hostile intentions and promised fidelity in future. By the good offices of Williams, the war was delayed four years.

During the year 1675, there were again indications of an approaching outbreak. The increasing insolence of the Indians and the unusual frequency of crimes, gave warning that a great public calamity was impending. Massachusetts was thoroughly alarmed. The Governor and Council at Boston despatched three commissioners to the Indians of Narragansett and Coweset.<sup>2</sup> They arrived at Williams's house in Providence on the 22d of June with a letter from the Governor and Council, praying his advice and aid in their negotiations. His strength and influence were not now what they had once been, when, single-handed, he had held back the Narragansetts from a fatal league with the Pequots, forty years before. But within half an hour from the reading of the letter, Williams was on the way to Narragansett. He saw that their mission was hopeless, but he did all that he could. Being only an associate with

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(1) See R. I. Col. Records, II. 267, July 22, 1669. Letter to Plymouth in reply to their warning of Philip's conspiracy; also August 30, 1671, p. 379, 408, of the same.

(2) Williams to Winthrop, June 25 and 27, 1675. Narr. Club Pub., VI. 366, 370.

commissioners of Massachusetts and Connecticut, attended by an armed guard, he could not use the persuasions which had proved effectual with the Narragansetts in their fathers' days, and there was now no Canonius to give effect to his words. The Narragansetts were, and had been, for weeks or months<sup>1</sup> in daily communication with Philip, and it seemed (June 27, 1675) that Philip durst not have proceeded so far, without assurances of their aid. But they were for the inoment overawed by the firm bearing of the commissioners of Massachusetts and Connecticut,—denied that they had sent men to Philip,<sup>2</sup> promised that they never would, and gave assurances of fidelity and peace. But with all their fair promises, Williams was not deceived. The lawless conduct of their tribesmen gave him occasion "to suspect that all the fine words from the Indian Sachems to us, were but words of policy, falsehood and treachery." He feared that it was useless, but he made a last and painful effort for the people to whom he had dedicated his life.<sup>3</sup> While he was yet endeavouring to persuade the Narragansetts, the work of destruction had been begun by the Wampanoags, (June 24), and his labour was at an end.

It has been of late, somewhat usual to overrate the ability displayed by Philip of Momt Hope, in his warfare upon civilisation. The facts scarcely warrant the commendation. He possessed none of the coolness, shrewdness and self-restraint of old Canonius, or of many Indian leaders of later days, and had none of his discernment of the power of civilisation. His own social system—the only one he knew—without union among its tribes, or loyalty, or good faith among its people, had not enabled him to appreciate the tenacity of purpose of a race of a higher moral level, who had faith in one another, and a government behind them which trusted them, and which they could

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(1) Narr. Club Pub., VI. 370.

(2) Ibid., p. 367.

(3) Letter of June, 27, 1675, Ibid., p. 369. "Sir, my old bones and eyes are weary with travel and writing to the Governors of Massachusetts and Rhode Island and now to yourselves," etc.

trust, in return. He knew that the Wampanoags had abandoned the Narragansetts, on the first inducements from the colony of Plymouth. Could he hope for anything better, in any ill fortune to himself? Had the scattered English no support from beyond the sea? What hope of escape had he, in the event of failure? Such thoughts have occurred to abler chiefs than Philip. His sole and absorbing purpose was the immediate gratification of revenge for insults to himself.

The uprising of the Indians was hopeless from the beginning. The English were now too numerous for their assaults, and their only hope was in the aid of the King of France. But Louis XIV showed no zeal in behalf of his brother sovereigns of the Narragansetts and Wampanoags. It was a time of peace, and French officers from Canada could give aid only by stealthy supplies of powder, but not by any active service or command. If Philip had possessed the sagacity of some of his race in later days, he would have chosen the opportunity afforded by a war with France. He would then have received active assistance of the most formidable character, and in the event of failure, he and his people would have been included in a treaty of peace. It was fortunate for New England that he had not patience. The superiority of the English navy was not then established. A few battalions led by officers who had learned soldiership in the campaigns of Turenne or Luxembourg, aided by engineers of the school of Vauban, and a few men of war in the harbour of Boston,—while the Indians ravaged the interior,—might, we may apprehend, have been an overmatch for Major General Gookin, and the Boston trainbands. In the end we cannot doubt that England would have vindicated her sovereignty. But if a war could have been protracted until Massachusetts was exhausted and the territory had been reconquered by English troops, her political organisation would never have been reconstructed upon the old foundations. The Puritan rule had gone by in England, and the counsellors of Charles II would have built up another New



England, upon a new Plymouth rock. A second New England would have been after the model of Virginia or New York.

It was well that Philip of Pokanoket could not form such a combination as this. It would not be fair to judge him by a comparison with chiefs of the Sioux or Dacotahs of recent times. Some of these have received a tincture of education from French missionary priests, and know the white man's character and policy, and have learned a strategy troublesome even to a great nation. Philip had few of these advantages. His military ideas had been learned from the English in his neighbourhood, and in his day, they had but little of such teaching to impart.<sup>1</sup> He should be contrasted with the enemies of civilisation nearer to his own day. The American colonies have encountered foes like Pontiac or Brant far more able and dangerous than he. These were for a time, more successful, having calmness and self-command, both to plan and to execute, and the forecast not to close behind them, in the event of failure, the door of advantageous retreat and submission. Philip like others, could choose his time, and in choosing it, he took no account of the work before him, or of his possible allies, but seems to have been urged onward by mere rage and hatred. He must have known that Boston was the citadel of New England, and that he had done little until she was overcome, and Boston he could not venture to attack. He knew that the Mohegans were living quietly under the rule of Connecticut, and that her whole force was available against him. Did he look for a retreat, behind him there was no inaccessible wilderness, in which he could take refuge until he could renew the contest. In his rear was Sir Edmund Andros,<sup>2</sup> with the

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(1) See Hutchinson's Hist. Mass. I. 281. The fact that the "Praying Indians" at Natick had military officers of their own seems to have been known to Philip in 1676. He then said: "Praying Indians were subjects to Massachusetts and had officers and magistrates appointed; —they (*i. e.* the Wampanoags) had no such thing with them and therefore were not subject."

(2) Governor of New York in 1675-6. Hutchinson's Coll., p. 490. Same in



Mohawks, friendly to the English, and ready to fall upon the confederates of the Wampanoags. Craft, dissimulation, power to watch opportunity or to wait events were exhibited by chiefs who have undertaken like enterprises, but they were wanting in Philip of Mount Hope. And so ended his career, involving in a common ruin all who had joined him in his desperate undertakings with a haste and passion which did not suffer them to estimate the probabilities of success, or the certain consequences of failure.

To this reckless leader, the Narragansetts listened with no appearance of dissent. The times were strangely altered, with this new generation. Old Canonieus would never have suffered the inferior, and once subject Wampanoags to dictate the policy of his tribe. There was none like him now, and they went headlong to destruction, with their young Sachem Canonchet. It is not probable that he had philosophy enough to determine whether it were preferable to risk a sudden destruction, or to waste away in servitude to a superior race.

In anticipation of what was coming, the force of the Narragansetts had been anxiously estimated, during their later years. In the absence of statistics or of trustworthy contemporary evidence, it seems probable that the tribe had been steadily diminishing, during the thirty years before. The fighting men had slowly wasted away. Not more than a thousand

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Prince Society's Collections. 2d Vol. of Hutchinson papers, p. 225-26.  
E. Randolph's Narrative, 1676.

"The governor of New York hath proved very serviceable to the Massachusetts in this warre, and had the magistrates of Boston either conferred with, or hearkened to the advice of Colonel Andross, the Indian warre had either been diverted or proved less destructive, for he offered, and would have engaged the Mohawks and Maquot Indians to have fallen upon the Sachem Philip and his confederates, but his friendly advice and offers, were slighted, nevertheless Colonel Andros, out of his dutie to his Majestie, kept the aforesaid Indians from taking any part with the Sachim Philip."

See Prince Society's Collection, Andros tracts, Vol. I. preface, pp. xvi, xvii. "New England Faction discovered," by E. Randolph, II. No. 14, p. 16-17.

can be shown to have perished in 1675-6, of whom as many died by cold as by battle.<sup>1</sup> Yet with the loss of them the force of the nation was gone. There was no power of recovery.

To preserve this last remnant, Williams made a last effort among the Narragansetts. But he had now grown old, and Canonicus had left no successor. He "told the young Sachem and his men that Philip was his looking-glass." This appeal to his pride failing, Williams forewarned him of the future. "He was deaf to all advice, and now was overset. He caught at every part of the country, to save himself but he shall never get ashore." \* \* "I told him that if he were false to his engagements, we would pursue them into a winter's war, when they should not as musketoes and rattlesnakes in warm weather bite us." With this forecast of the future, ended the last words of Williams to the Narragansetts.

Early in the summer of 1675, the alarm had overspread New England. There was ample cause for it, for with the exception of Boston and its neighborhood—New Haven and Hartford, there were few towns in New England able to repel attack. There could now be no adequate preparation. We know not at present, whether to wonder most at the hardness or the inexperience of the settlers, of the upper Connecticut valley. Beyond the reach of military support, from Boston, and unable to assist each other, they had built upon an Indian frontier, as if it were a place of rest and peace, and so it was with nearly the whole of New England. Excepting the clearings, around the villages, nearly the whole country was forest and wilderness, and an enemy could approach unperceived to the very doors. A sufficient number of men could not be detailed for outpost service, and there was no field artillery or any adequate supply of munitions of war. If such were the situation of Massachusetts, Rhode Island differed only for the worse. Newport felt

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(1) Gen. Gookin, the most competent judge of military affairs at that time says "all that people cannot make above one thousand able men," Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., 1st series, I. 148.

secure in her isolation, and cherished little affection for the mainland. Philip may well have thought that the island might be left to itself, until the other towns were overcome, as he felt in no danger from that direction. The whole burden rested upon Providence and Warwick. They did what they could, but, alone and unsupported, they could do little more than remain in their habitations and await events. With the last interview of Williams with the Narragansetts, the work of devastation began. The only military ability displayed by Philip, was in the simultaneousness and far reaching extent of his attacks. Even this was probably a suggestion of French officers, by whom Williams thought that the Indians were assisted.<sup>1</sup> Upon widely separated villages and hamlets, the blow fell heavily and at once. They had no men of military experience or training, and could only look to the security of their families—abandoning their homesteads to their fate. The tribes went to war with Englishmen in the same fashion, as that in which they had made war upon each other, when there were the same strategy and the same disadvantages on either side.<sup>2</sup> They deemed thick woods and swamps sufficient refuges for women and children, while the men went to fight. They aimed at their enemies from behind trees, and in one of their ancient battles very few were slain on either side. They knew of none but a mere partizan warfare. Being without discipline they were subject to no control. Their forces melted away on the first reverse, and could with difficulty be reassembled. They had no conception of the necessity of magazines of provisions or materials of war, nor if they had them, could they construct military works adequate to their defence. The Indians of New England might have been useful auxiliaries in a French invasion. They could make havoc among its outposts, but could never unaided, have waged an aggressive war upon civilisation. Prolonged efforts

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(1) See Williams's letter to Gov. Leverett, Jan. 14. 1675, Narr. Club Pub., VI. 381-82. Confession of Joshua Tift.

(2) Key, pp. 74, 152.

were impossible. Whatever was lost, of stores or arms, could not be replaced, and any serious disaster was fatal. Then as ever since, Indian warfare showed its greatest capacity, for mischief at the very beginning. During four months, its terrors were felt by the scattered English of the frontier. The Government of Massachusetts was for the time checked, but not discouraged. They saw that nothing could be done until the winter, and that when the barbarians could no longer keep the field, would come the opportunity of civilisation. As usual in times of Indian troubles, Williams was again consulted, and now apparently for the last time. On the 11th of October, 1675,<sup>1</sup> he wrote to Gov. Leverett—in effect—that the Indians would not venture to attack a fort, or garrison, and would avoid battles in the open field, and advised the settlers in the country to fire the woods around their dwellings and to beware of treachery and ambuscade. And so passed four months of anxiety and peril.

The situation in Mooshassuc was scarcely more reassuring. Notwithstanding the nominal friendship of the Narragansetts, there was little reason to hope that in a conflict of races, they would not take active part with their own blood. Failing to receive aid from the colony, the townsmen did what they could for themselves. The “garrison house”<sup>2</sup> was fortified. It was perhaps the largest building in the town. The fort above the town mill was built, but we know not by whom, or when. This was by the advice of Williams, and by a subscription, unaided by the treasury. Although they were as yet unmolested, the freemen deemed other precautions necessary as the war went on. Town Records, Providence, October 14, 1675.

“Town Meeting, Arthur Fenner, Moderator. \* \* Ordered that six men every day, shall be sent out of the Towne to discover what Indians shall come to disquiet the Towne and that every housekeeper and all men residing in this Towne, shall take his turn, and he that shall refuse to take his turn, shall

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(1) Narr. Club Pub., VI. 373-75.

(2) On the lot where is now the Providence Bank.

forfeit to the Towne for every day's defect, 5 shillings, and that it shall be taken by distraint by the constable, and this order to be in force, from the 15th day of this instant October, and that this order shall stand in full force, until the Towne order the contrary."

During the summer of 1675, the Narragansetts had lain quiet. They had sheltered the women and children of the Wampanoags and enabled their men to go to war. Canoes were constantly passing and repassing between Narragansett and Plymouth Colony. Intelligence was daily forwarded between the tribes, and many warriors had gone to the aid of Philip. But the nation had as yet done nothing. They were true to their ancient reputation of being less warlike than their neighbours. They were unable to compel the aid of their wary dependents the Niantics. They seem to have thought that they could lie inactive and suffer their country to be made a base of operation by Philip against Massachusetts. They had done enough to involve themselves in the responsibilities of the war, and had yet to learn the Englishmen's opinion of their proceedings. The Narragansetts looked on with approval, during what they esteemed the successes of the Wampanoags, until the snows of December drove them to their wigwams and their strongholds. With that winter came the end of the Narragansett monarchy, and people. December 27, 1675.

Rhode Island had given no provocation to her Indians, and might have been involved in no disaster, if there had been a man capable of controlling the Narragansetts, at the head of her affairs. When the event came which Williams had long foreseen, one of the foremost men of the Assembly was Walter Clarke of Newport, a leader among the disciples of Fox. If we may judge of him by the remaining specimens of his work, and from the notices of his contemporaries, he was a man feeble in action, smooth and procrastinating in speech, and ready with professions which might be unmeaning, or which it was not his duty to fulfill.<sup>1</sup> When applications for aid were urged by the

(1) In 1675, Walter Clark was an assistant and at the head of the committee who wrote the letters discouraging any action by the towns. No oppo-

mainland people, the Governor and his Assembly could give no wiser opinion than that the other colonies could not support themselves and their friends, that it was best for the Plantations to give up the contest, to resign their homesteads to the enemy, and to take refuge in Newport. What would have saved Newport, if the imbecile policy of the Governor and Assembly had not been thwarted by Massachusetts and Connecticut, he does not seem to have considered.

We do not know how large was the majority by which the "Foxians" controlled the policy of Rhode Island. But the minority was also large, and their discontent was daily increasing. We can imagine the effect of the Governor's refusal of aid, upon a people who had never been wanting in courage and pugnacity. The ruling majority were willing to do some little for the safety of Newport, which was not then threatened, and where there was no prospect of fighting. But they would give no aid to Providence which could only be defended by hard blows. While Clark was advising submission, his friend Edmunston (the disputant with Williams in 1672), was writing thus in his journal :<sup>1</sup>

"Great troubles attended Friends, by reason of the war, which lay very heavy on places belonging to that quarter,—*without the Island*, the Indians killing and burning all before them, and the people that were not Friends were outrageous to fight, but the Governor being a Friend (one Walter Clarke) could not give commissions to kill and destroy men."

To the same purpose wrote Thomas Story :<sup>2</sup> "As a matter of conscience, they would not fight Indians,"—thus preferring that if any lives were lost, they should be those of the English settlers. Edmunston wrote privately, the reasons which Clarke had not the courage to speak out. One who had scruples about the support of government by force might well decline

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sition could be organized when men were flying for their lives, and he was elected governor in May, 1676, after the burning of Providence.

(1) Folio, p. 81, in John Carter Brown Library.

(2) Life, folio in John Carter Brown Library, p. 266, 267.



civil and especially military trusts. But the logic by which Clarke satisfied his conscience in the acceptance of the highest office in the colony, and in his solemn engagement to perform its duties, imposed by the charter, while he had no intention of fulfilling the most important of them, he had not thought fit to transmit to us. Subsequent generations have not been able to discover it. The people felt that they had been abandoned by their government, and their indignation rose high. They could do nothing then, but during many following years they remembered that the loss and ruin which fell upon the Plantations, might have been avoided if a man with the will and courage of Benedict Arnold had been at the head of the colonial government.

There seems sufficient reason to believe that the town might have been saved from destruction, if it had not been left to its fate by Newport. The spirit of the freemen was bold and confident, and Williams, as a captain of militia, showed once more the pugnacity of his youth. As it was, the townsmen had no resource but flight, while the garrison of twenty-eight men made good their resistance, and preserved what remained of their habitations. The Narragansett survivors of the "great swamp fight," (Dec. 27, 1675), appear to have been mere fugitives, without purpose and without hope. Their government and families and race had all perished together. They now accounted Providence among their enemies, and made a frantic effort for revenge. They had no place of refuge, and no home to which they had any desire to return. The carnage and destruction of which they might be the authors could only be profitless to themselves.

The burning of Providence, April 10, 1676, has been described by Mr. Stone, with a fulness of research which recalls the scene, and leaves nothing to be desired. We have no account of it from any of the garrison. The only writer present among them was Williams, and he has suffered it to perish. The contemporary author who has preserved the

greatest number of details, is Samuel Niles.<sup>1</sup> Such as he collected prove that the original barbarism of the Narragansetts still appeared in its most revolting forms.<sup>2</sup> The anticipations of Williams proved correct. The fighting men of the Narragansetts did not venture to attack the fort, or the "garrison house." They took no plunder, for they had no means of transport, and no ulterior designs or hopes. They departed, leaving nothing but a provocation to sterner and more vindictive measures against themselves. Soon after this frantic effort, the war, the kingdom, and the life of Philip, came to an end together. (August 12, 1676).

When the revolt was at an end, its consequences were felt throughout the colony during that generation. It had its effect upon the fortunes of sects and parties, some of which never regained their lost popularity. The loss of their habitations was the least which the freeholders of Providence sustained. Timber was abundant on every hand, and might be had for the labour of felling. By mutual aid they were soon the occupants of houses perhaps better than those which had been destroyed, and masters of new flocks and herds. But a multitude of deeds and records had perished in the flames. The best land titles had become clouded, boundaries were lost, and a new source of controversy was opened in a community never averse to wordy war. But on the other hand, some rancorous debates were now forever closed. The grants of Canonicens and Miantonomo took effect at last in fee simple, in the sense in which the "Proprietors" had understood them. There was no longer a divided rule in the colony. Henceforth, the country was their own. The sect which had converted one of its tenets into a

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(1)The first graduate of Harvard College who was a native of Rhode Island.

(2)Enraged at meeting none of the inhabitants, they mutilated the cattle, cutting out their tongues, and driving them into the houses, where they were burnt alive. This was an old practice with the Indians. They did the same in their war with the Dutch, on Long Island, in 1642-3. Trumbull's Hist. Conn., I. 138.

political doctrine, was for the time expelled from office. In 1676, Benedict Arnold, though not a member of the Legislature, was invited to a seat among them, and to advise them, and to give his counsel in the perilous state of their affairs. He was again elected Governor, (May, 1677), and but for his speedy death, (1678), might again have enjoyed a long tenure of power. Williams regained his lost popularity. In May, 1677, he was once more chosen to the magistracy. The people were persuaded by the conduct of his opponents during the war, as they never had been by controversial tracts or speeches. In 1677, the legislature passed a new militia act of unusual stringency, which avowedly made no allowance for "pretence of conscience," and in plain terms characterises those who had well nigh brought the colony to destruction.<sup>1</sup> Some new political embarrassments came with peace. Connecticut claimed Narragansett as a conquered territory abandoned by its former owners. But the worst and most enduring effect of the war, was the long alienation between Providence and Newport. The islanders, in their comparative security during the outbreak, had taken little thought for the mainland to which they had been united against their will. How bitterly their conduct was resented, may be read in the fading records of the Town of Providence, and in the factions of a colony too small for anything but peace and unity, but, for several generations, hopelessly divided against itself.

These things, immediately concerning the now dominant race, find more appropriate place elsewhere. The remnant of the Indians, we find now without Sachems who could enforce some restraint upon them and without white teachers of any sort. It was long before they ceased to trouble the colony. After the war they were during some years subjected to little police restraint or inspection. Drunken Indians found a con-

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(1) Quakers were during many years elected to the office of governor, but not again, (it is believed) upon their religious platform. The last of their society held the position in 1768.

genial society of drunken white men, and the decay of the race went on. They were easily incited to trespasses or crimes, by the "border ruffians" of those days. The complaints of long suffering townsmen bore some resemblance to those of the days before the war. During the thirty years which succeeded it, the surviving Narragansetts, and their kinsfolk the Niantics, must have been a heavy burden upon the slender resources of the colony. There was no poor law for their relief. But poverty is older than pauperism, and is equally oppressive, whether it find its support in theft, or charity, or taxation. The people were convinced at last, of the necessity of greater vigour in the protection of property, and they were no longer restrained by fear of retaliation. The days of a stronger government had begun.

How thoroughly the spirit of the Narragansetts had been broken, may appear from the following extract from the Town Meeting records. Before the war, the Town could only attempt to exclude Indians from "Providence Neck," leaving them to occupy their old fields at their will. They were now excluded from the entire township. The reference to "Indians that have served their time with us," proves that the system of servitude, or apprenticeship, established after the war, had been carried into effect.

"April 27, 1683, it being ye Towne's Quarterday. \* \* Upon a bill by several of our neighbours, exhibited to this meeting, concerning Indians coming into our townshipp, to hunt and fish &c, and doe thereby damnify our inhabitants greatly, and those Indians also yt. have served their time with us. For prevention whereof, the Towne doe order, that for ye future no Indian nor Indians shall come within our townshipp, (that hath not served their time in our towne), to hunt or fish, or to inhabitt. And if any of them, (so with strangers) shall so doe, they shall be dealt with, according to their demeritts. The which shall be, ye forfeiture of his or their gunn or gunns, or to ye value thereof, or trapp or trapps, or such things as he or they are found nseing for their guine. The one halfe to be to ye informer, and ye other halfe to goe to the Town Treasury. And for all such as are already within ye townshipp, shall have seven dayes liberty to depart. And wee doe hereby warne all our Indians to

informe other Indians yt. belong not to our Towne, to depart within ye said time, and doe deny any, here to abide, but as they shall pass along ye King's Highway, about their lawfull occasions, any order in this Towne formerly made to ye contrary notwithstanding."

Nothing so clearly indicates the disappearance of all power among the Indians, or apprehension among the white men, as the change in the character of the colonial legislation. The remainder of the tribes were now treated as any other depressed or pauperised class, whose incapacity required the protection of the state. With Philip's War, the history of Narragansetts and Nianties, as free and independent people, reached its close. Their tribeship had a nominal existence, and they were allowed a council whose functions were advisory, and which, (if anything were wanting), could address the colonial legislature on behalf of their people. But they could enforce no orders, and any obedience to their nominal Sachem was due only to the ignorance or superstition of their people. They both were subject in all things to the power of the General Assembly.

Once more, during a brief period, the Rhode Island Indians became an occasion of alarm. In May, 1702, war was declared by Queen Anne, by the Emperor of Germany, and by the States General of Holland, against France and Spain. During the summer it was the absorbing topic along the Atlantic seaboard, and was discussed in all its aspects at the Town Mill and the Town Meeting of Providence. The Indians were still numerous enough to do mischief, and all New-England adopted measures of security.<sup>1</sup> The Town Meetings of Rhode Island shared in the apprehension. Probably some of the Rhode Island Indians indulged in indiscreet expressions of hope for aid from Canada. Had the French seen fit to employ them as incendiaries, and to furnish them with arms and instructions, they might have perpetrated acts which would have diverted the force of New-England from the war, to its own protection.<sup>2</sup>

(1) See Trumbull's Hist. Conn., I. 405-6.

(2) Providence Town Records, August 16, 1704. "The Towne having taken into their serious consideration ye greate danger that ye inhabitants in ye outer-

For a generation, the terrible events of Philip's War its midnight alarms, and ruined households, furnished the tales which were told during the winter evenings, by the firesides of the Plantations. Some of the survivors did not find their recollections grow less vivid by frequent repetition, and sought for their reward with a persistency which would have done credit to pensioners of later days.

"Providence Quarter Day, July ye 28th 1707." \* \*  
Whereas William Whipple hath this day preferred a bill to ye Towne, desireing ye Towne to gratify him with fifty acres of land *or more*, for service which (he saith) he did ye Towne in the Indian wars, about Thirty years since : The Towne have considered ye Bill. Their answer to it is, that they doe not *yet* see cause to gratifie his request."

The old man had probably told his story so often, that he began to remember signal services which his brother free-men could not recall to their recollections. He was forced to content himself with the gratitude of posterity.<sup>1</sup>

most parts of our Towne are in," (it then included nearly the whole county, very much of which was densely covered with woods), "by reason of ye common enemy,"—the Indians were always so styled—no reconciliation ever took place—"and y<sup>e</sup> most likely way for their preservation at present is by keeping out a considerable number of men to range Providence woods as a scout, to endeavour the discovery of ye sd enemys. We do order that Major Dexter have power to send out eighteen men on said service, and to pay them their wages, which we do order to be 2sh. and 6p. per day for each man, and they to find themselves provisions and ammunition." From this glimpse of Providence Plantations in 1704, we may perceive that their population and wealth had somewhat increased. They could now employ a larger force and give them better pay, than when the town was in danger of destruction, thirty years before. The days of Fox and Edmunston had gone by.

- (1) The town was not unmindful of those who had done real service in its behalf. Andrew Edmunds received a grant of land, for a ferry, at the "Narrow passage," now "Red Bridge." See Rider's Hist. Tract, No. XV. Expenses and claims were paid by the Assembly long afterwards. R. I. Col. Rec., III. 165-166. A. D. 1682. October, 1684. As the commissioners of the Indian tribe, now extinct, intend to publish a history of the state legislation upon the subject, a brief notice of it will be sufficient in this place.



As a measure of security, the legislature, in 1704, enacted that negroes and Indians, whether freemen or slaves, who should be found abroad after nine o'clock at night without a certificate from their masters, or some English person of the family to which he, she or they belong, or some lawful excuse, might be arrested by *any person* and brought before an Assistant or a justice, who should cause them to be whipped, not exceeding thirteen stripes, "unless their incorrigible behaviour deserve more." No housekeeper was to entertain any slaves or servants, negroes or Indians after nine o'clock at night, without their owner's leave. White men of every grade were allowed to keep their own hours.

In this state of servitude and debasement, the surviving Niantics and Narragansetts were provided with a resting place. In 1709, the Ninigret of that time, the Sachem also of the Connecticut kinsmen of the Niantics, transferred his Rhode Island lands to the General Assembly, thus providing a reservation for the remnant of his tribe and blood.<sup>1</sup> He covenanted that the assembly should have the care and oversight of his estates, and all grants, leases and mortgages since the 28th of March, were to be void. More than half of the surviving Indians were there subjected to guardianship and control. They now acquired some of the habits of civilisation—dwelling in houses and wearing clothes.<sup>2</sup>

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(1) 22d and 28th of March, 1709.

(2) Ninigret and his tribe were mere wards of the colonial legislature. Their lands were wholly subject to its control. (See R. I. Col. Records, IV. 52; March, 1709, pp. 61-63, 1713, p. 151, 1716, p. 211, 1718, p. 236). Thenceforth the assembly was frequently called upon to exercise its authority for their protection and relief. (R. I. Col. Records, IV. 221, A. D. 1717). Commissioners were from time to time appointed to oversee and lease Ninigret's lands, as should seem most for the Sachem's interests. (Subsequent acts, A. D. 1716, A. D. 1717, A. D. 1727, A. D. 1739, pp. 550, 562). He could make no sales, but by consent of the assembly. (R. I. Col. Records, IV. 450-51, A. D. 1731, A. D. 1739, A. D. 1742). As times went on, there was some change in the mode of management, (A. D. 1759). The laws prohibiting the purchase of Indian lands were repealed, and a committee was appointed to set off

The remainder of the Indians were scattered throughout the colony, and bore a more sorry reputation, than their brethren of the reservation. They sunk, from a public danger, into a public nuisance. They were said<sup>1</sup> to have furnished some valuable labourers, but they gained little improvement or elevation. They filled a disproportionate space in the criminal records of the last century. All efforts in their behalf were defeated by their migratory and dissolute habits, and their tramping and wandering life,—an inheritance from their tribal and communistic days. The thrifty yeoman of the last century regarded them with no sentimental or poetic feelings, but saw in them only the worthless descendants of murderers and thieves. Being thus fixed in a hopeless degradation, there was small incitement to virtues of any sort. The Town Records of the last century furnish numerous instances of emancipated negroes, who became householders and useful members of the community, and who left some property behind them, for the care of the Courts of Probate. It would be difficult to find such examples among those of pure Indian blood.

To remedy this debasement, the legislature made a vigorous application of the correctives deemed effectual in an age of severe penal laws. In 1718, negro and Indian slaves, found stealing or thieving, were to be summarily tried before a justice without a jury, and whipped or banished. In the same year, Indians were exempted from being sued for debt. As this was found to be a feeble restraint upon the cupidity of white men, in June, 1724, this privilege was limited to the heirs of old Ninigret, except that Indians were not to be liable to suits for “tavern scores” and liquors which had been sold to them.

The act of 1729 recites that it is very common for Indians to make dances, which has been found by experience, to be

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lands for the sole use of the tribe. In 1773, farther legislation was found necessary for securing the Indian lands, and so onward to the present day, the guardianship of the legislature has been actively and kindly exercised for the poor remnant of the ancient possessors of the soil.

(1) Potter's "Hist. Narragansett." R. I. Hist. Soc. Coll., III. 94.

very prejudicial to the adjacent inhabitants, by their excessive drinking and fighting and wounding each other; and that many servants are enticed to outstay their time at such dances, and then run away from their masters. It is then enacted that the Town councils of each town have full power to make such laws and orders for the better regulating of such Indian dances in their respective towns, as they shall think needful, and to fine all such persons, either English, Indians, or others that shall sell or give any strong liquors at such dances not exceeding 40s. The act of 1730 recites that evil minded persons often draw Indians into their debt, by selling them goods at extravagant rates, and then get the Indians bound to them for a longer time than is just and reasonable, to the great hurt and damage of the Indians, and to the dishonour of the government. It enacts that no Indian is to be bound apprentice or servant except by two justices of the peace. Such was their evil reputation for theft and other crimes, that Indian slaves were not suffered to be imported, while the trade in negroes was permitted if not encouraged.<sup>1</sup>

While the ancient possessors of the soil were in this hopeless dependence, speculators and claimants deemed that something might be made out of titles derived from Sachems of the century before, and invoked the aid of the Assembly. The early law givers of the colony had felt little reverence for the kings of the Narragansetts, and their successors were utterly dry-eyed and unsympathetic towards their grandchildren. One specimen may suffice. In 1717-18, the granddaughters of Miantonomo appeared before the Assembly as claimants and heirs of tribal lands in Narragansett, which, they averred, had belonged to their grandfather, in his royal character and capacity.<sup>2</sup> An elaborate argument in their behalf was patiently heard by the legislators. It claimed for Miantonomo the sovereign rights which a king of Great Britain asserted in his own dominions. The Assembly, with much show of reason, asserted

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(1)R. I. Col. Records, IV. 191-93, A. D. 1715.

(2)R. I. Col. Records, IV. 229-33.

that they only are the true successors to the Narragansett royalty. They emphatically deny that Miantonomo's children were ever Sachems or Kings, or that he or they had any proper territorial sovereignty.

"We say that old Miantonomo, in his days, was acknowledged to be one of the Sachems of the Narragansetts, but that he, or any of his successors was ever king of this government, we deny, as in duty to our royal sovereigns, the Kings and Queens of Great Britain, we are and ever have been obliged to do."

A sense of their own colonial interests often happily coincided with a feeling of loyalty to the reigning family of Great Britain, in the legislators of those days.

In the earlier decades of the last century, slavery had become widely diffused throughout the colony. Although the apprenticeships of many of them had long expired, it would seem that those Narragansetts who had been sold into slavery after Philip's War did not always recover their freedom. Indian slaves appear among other "effects," in the Probate inventories, and we may learn from thence, the estimate which was set upon their services. Indian slaves are generally appraised at eight and ten pounds each, while negroes are valued at from sixty to eighty pounds. It would now be difficult to ascertain the exact price which those sums represented in "old tenor bills." It is sufficient for our present purpose, that a negro labourer was reckoned as the equivalent of five or six Indians. They only became efficient workmen, under a stern and vigorous discipline. We have a like record in Massachusetts. In Little Compton, (then a part of Massachusetts), the Indians were the chief builders of stone fences, and, says the historian, were summarily "flagellated" when they had not worked according to their contracts,<sup>1</sup>—an effectual persuasive to industry, in an age not tolerant of strikes.

Religious zeal and charity attempted something in behalf of the remnant of the Narragansetts and Niantics. These, as in

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(1) Mass. Hist. Soc. Coll., 1st series, IX. 201.

earlier days, had small desire to listen to the emissaries of Massachusetts. A new influence, which had been unknown in the colony in the days of their tribal life, was now exerted for their improvement.<sup>1</sup>

The missionaries of the English Church were instructed to pay attention to their wants, and they did so, with some success. At the request of the Ninigret of the time,<sup>2</sup> a committee of the Assembly was authorized to lay out twenty acres of Ninigret's land, and he was empowered to give a deed of them for the use of the Church of England in Westerly. A church was erected and a minister appointed. That more was not accomplished was probably due to the same causes which thwarted the efforts of all others. During Dean Berkeley's residence in Rhode Island, he made many visits to Narragansett, to see the remnant of the Indians, and to render them such service as he might. He found little to encourage his hopes. In his sermon before the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, (London, 1731), he says:

"The native Indians who are said to have been thousands within the compass of this colony, do not at present, amount to a thousand, including every age and sex, and these are nearly all servants or labourers for the English, who have contributed more to destroy their bodies by means of strong liquors, than by any means to improve their minds, or save their souls. This slow poison, jointly operating with the small pox and their wars, (but much more destructive than both), has consumed the Indians, not only in our colonies, but far and wide upon our confines, and having made havoc of them, is now doing the same thing by those who taught them this odious vice."<sup>3</sup>

In their degraded condition, there was little efficacy in the laws of the colony, regulating the behaviour of the Indians and

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(1) See Reports of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. London. A copy is in the library of Brown University. Their labours continued until the end of the colonial time. In 1764, the society sent a missionary-schoolmaster among the Rhode Island Indians, provided with books, etc.

(2) See R. I. Col. Records, IV. 397, A. D. 1727; Feb. 1734-35, p. 501.

(3) This view of their hopeless state is like that of Callender, "Hist. discourse," Elton's ed. R. I. Hist. Soc. Coll. IV. 140-41.



protecting them from imposition. The specimens which have been quoted, sufficiently indicate that they were less able to provide for themselves than the negroes, who as a class, have never been a burden to the community. They added little to the resources of the colony or state. But their ancient familiarity with the sea, aided by their unfixed, and migratory habit of life, well fitted many of them to become sailors—the only pursuit of the white men for which they have shown any peculiar aptitude. Their numbers may have been underrated in Berkeley's day, or he spoke only of Indians of pure blood. The census on which he relied, seems not very exact. But the tribe was still wasting away, when, in 1774, there was an apparent increase. There were in that year still 1479 persons called Indians, of whom there were in Charlestown 528, in South Kingstown 210; of the other towns where they were most numerous, Providence had 68, in Newport there were 46, and Warwick returned 88, many of these last being domestic servants. During the last century, the old pride of race yielded to a sense of the common degradation. They were now mingled with the negroes, whom in earlier days, they had regarded with an aversion exceeding any which they had borne to the Englishmen.<sup>1</sup> As all who had a mixture of Indian blood might now share the benefits of the "reservation," it is probable that many were now styled Indians, who in former times had been accounted negroes, and that there was no real increase. It was for the interest of the towns, to reckon as many legal "Indians" as possible, and by quartering them on the reservation, to exempt the freeholders from taxes for their relief. The mixed race, (the negro element constantly and largely increasing), has long been the sole representative of the original stock. There has been a strange mingling of discordant qualities. In former times, it must have been as difficult to tempt the negro to leave his reservation, as to persuade the Indian to remain there.

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(1) Compare Callender, p. 141.



The characteristic traits which arrested the attention of Williams, long since disappeared. If he could have revisited, in this half century, the poor remnant of the once formidable Narragansetts, he could scarcely have recognized in them the descendants of a race whose favour he had been glad to purchase, and to whom he had been grateful for a refuge in their domain.

After they had ceased to be of any account to soldiers or to legislators, the Narragansetts became subjects for rhetoricians and poets. These extenuated their barbaric vices, and imagined for them virtues which had found no exhibition in historical events. Anecdotes and sayings claim our admiration, for which there is no sufficient authority, in contemporary testimony or in any trustworthy tradition. When the story of the last sachems was told, some two centuries after their overthrow, their characters were surrounded by a halo which had never been visible to those most interested in discerning it. These are the reflections of two American writers upon the death of Philip of Pokanoket. The first had studied the Indian character in too near a view to be misled by sentiment. Imagination lent no false colour to the hard realities of colonial life. At sunset, after the battle near Mount Hope, Captain Church was called to see the body of Philip. He says :

“Captain Church ordered his body to be pulled out of the mire to the upland. So, some of Captain Church’s Indians took hold of him and drew him from the mud to the uplands, and a great naked dirty beast he looked like. Captain Church then said that forasmuch as he had caused many an Englishman’s body to be unburied, and to rot above ground, that not one of his bones should be buried,” etc.<sup>1</sup>

A century and a half went by. Washington Irving thus concluded a meditation at Mount Hope :

“He went down, like a lonely bark foundering amid darkness and tempest,—without a pitying eye to weep his fall, or a friendly hand to record his struggle.”<sup>2</sup>

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(1) Church’s “Entertaining history of King Philip’s War,” p. 44.

(2) Irving’s “Sketch book,” (ed. 1848), p. 377.

The fashion of bestowing Indian names upon villages, buildings, or on other than natural objects, is of modern date in New England. It marks a period when society has been long delivered from Indian neighbours—has forgotten their dirt, theft and drunkenness, and, (the actual facts forgotten), can regard them with the charity which is readily bestowed upon extinct evils. The first generations of American birth felt too much pride in their heritage of civilisation, to confer barbaric names upon their towns. They neither felt nor professed much sympathy with the native race. They had inherited nothing from them. Their municipal and social traditions were from a nobler origin. They suffered ancient names to remain as landmarks among the rivers and hills. They could do no otherwise. But they borrowed little, even of emblems or symbols from the race which they had supplanted. When comparison is made of the taste and fancy of early Rhode Island, with those of Massachusetts, we shall not find ourselves at a disadvantage, in contrasting their heraldic shields. The anchor of Rhode Island loses none of its beauty or appropriateness as years go on. The red Indian who rejected to the last the ideas of civilisation, and who perished in his devotion to his native barbarism, seems a strange device for an enlightened and progressive commonwealth.



EARLY VOTARIES OF NATURAL SCIENCE IN  
RHODE ISLAND.

BY CHARLES W. PARSONS, M. D.



## EARLY VOTARIES OF NATURAL SCIENCE IN RHODE ISLAND.

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The first period of New England colonization furnished little in the way of scientific inquiry or observation. The necessities and the spirit of the settlers, exiled from their homes and cast upon these inhospitable shores, allowed scanty opportunities for search into the secrets of nature. Some of the first colonists, like Winthrop, left records of what they saw; but their notices of natural phenomena deal more with prodigies and monstrosities than with normal sequences of events, and bespeak rather their awe-struck wonder, amid the novelties and mysteries of their new abode, than a desire to trace the harmonies of the world around them. Some curious visitors like Wood and Josselyn<sup>1</sup> described the plants and animals of the country; but their representations, though graphic, and sometimes highly picturesque, are often fanciful, or evidently inaccurate.

Their accounts of the native inhabitants of course have their value for the student of the natural history of Man; but are too often warped by the disturbing influences of fear or hate; or else, as the historian Neal remarks of Wood and Josselyn "affect rather to make their Readers merry than tell them the truth." Where the New England fathers entered into kindly relations with the natives, results were obtained which add to the permanent stock of knowledge. Thus the Indian Bible of Eliot, undertaken from motives of pious benevolence, is now a

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(1) Josselyn's "New England Rarities," of which this society possesses a copy, has considerable value in its botanical part. It describes and figures, with fair correctness, some genera like *Sarracenia* and *Chelone*, and makes interesting distinctions between plants peculiar to the country; introduced plants, &c. *Sarracenia* (pitcher-plant) he calls "hollow-leaved lavender."



philological monument of peculiar value,—a kind of American Rosetta stone.

In Rhode Island, the conditions of life were even less favorable to scientific study than in the colonies of Massachusetts and Connecticut. There were fewer men of liberal education. The hard and narrowing struggle for mere subsistence in the early years of the Providence Plantation left little time or inclination for such pursuits. Whatever surplus mental energy overleaped the bounds of circumstance spent itself in theological controversy or petty local disputes.

I can think of only one partial exception to this statement. Roger Williams' "Key into the Language of America,"—conceived primarily in a spirit of philanthropy, and as a private help to his own memory, as he says,—partakes also of a scientific character. It embodies at any rate a valuable contribution to ethnology and philology,—sciences whose very names would have puzzled Roger Williams at first hearing. I think it represents some approach to scientific feeling,—a sense of the value of knowledge for its own sake, apart from its immediate practical applications.

His speculations on the origin of the Natives are avowedly mere suggestions; he says, quite in the spirit of modern science, "I shall present (not mine opinion but) my observations, to the judgment of the wise." He finds affinities in their language both to the Hebrew and the Greek,—his readiness to trace a Hebraic relationship being probably quickened by a desire to connect the Indians with the chosen people of Israel. But he comes to no more definite conclusion than the following, which is expressed with more than his usual grace:

"From Adam and Noah that they spring, it is granted on all hands. But for their later descent, and whence they came into those parts, it seems as hard to find, as to find the well-head of some fresh stream, which running many miles out of the country to the salt ocean, hath met with many mixing streams by the way."

The student of anthropology may draw curious material from his accounts of the customs of the Indians, as to food,

shelter, warfare, etc., etc. Dr. Palfrey, who habitually judges the Indians severely, controverts Williams' statement about their astronomical accomplishments, which I will quote as a specimen of his verse :

“The very Indian Boyes can give  
 “ To many Starres their name,  
 “ And know their Course, and therein do  
 “ Excell the English tame.  
 “ English and Indians, none enquire  
 “ Whose hand these Candles hold,  
 “ Who gives these stars their names,—Himself  
 “ More bright ten thousand fold.”

His accounts of quadrupeds, “fowle,” fish and mollusks are interesting, and bear the stamp of personal observation. The chapter on “Beasts ” ends with this comparative statement :

“ New England's wilde beasts are not fierce  
 “ As other wild beasts are ;  
 “ Some men are not so fierce, and yet  
 “ From mildnesse are they farre.”

“Whales are often cast up ; I have seen some of them, but not above sixtie foot long.”

The following passage has a true Rhode Island flavor :

“SICKISSUOG, CLAMS. Obs.—This is a sweet kind of shell fish, which all the Indians generally over the Country, Winter and Summer, delight in :—and at low water the women dig for them ; this fish, and the naturall liquors of it, they boile, and it makes their broth and their Nasaump (which is a kind of thickened broth) and their bread seasonable and savoury, instead of Salt,” &c.

In the parent country, little was done in a scientific direction during the first quarter of a century that followed the settlement of Providence in 1636. The late Mr. J. R. Green, in his “Short History of the English People ” says :

“Only two discoveries of any real value came from English research before the Restoration [1660] : Gilbert's discovery of terrestrial magnetism in the close of Elizabeth's reign, and the

great discovery of the circulation of the blood, which was taught by Harvey in the reign of James."

The nation's quarrel with Charles, the civil war and the usurpation of Cromwell were not favorable to the restful investigation of nature.

Soon after the Restoration of Charles II. two events occurred, which appear at first sight entirely unconnected, but which it is not altogether fanciful to think were in some degree the result of a common cause. The charter of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, granted in July, 1663, is mostly remarkable for forbidding that any person in the colony be molested for differences in religious belief, not disturbing the civil peace. This provision was foreshadowed in the letter addressed to the House of Commons by Charles while yet in exile in Holland, called the Declaration of Breda. So far as the "Merry Monarch" heeded it at all, it was owing, partly to policy, and partly to his indifferentism, his disgust with the religious disputes that had embittered his time, his half-sneering wonder that so much stress should be laid on sectarian differences, and his ill-concealed yearning toward the Romish church. It represented a reaction against Puritan bigotry, in the old world and in the new.

A year earlier, (July, 1662,) the Royal Society of London received its charter. The second John Winthrop, Governor of Connecticut, was its chosen correspondent in the western world. Its foundation was an important event in the history of science, both on account of the subsequent labors of this Society, and for what its incorporation indicated at the time, viz., a reaction from religious controversy toward the study of outward Nature. The national mind longed for quiet, and sought it in turning from the strifes of church and state to the study of natural phenomena.

"From the spiritual problems with which it had so long wrestled in vain, England turned at last to the physical world around it, to the observation of its phenomena, to the discovery of the laws which govern them." (*J. R. Green.*)

Charles himself dabbled in science, and proposed quizzical problems to the Royal Society.

I hope I may be pardoned for this digression, which traces a slender thread of affinity between the two contemporaneous charters, that of our own State, and that of the learned institution which long represented the physical sciences in Great Britain. Through this Society, many of the contributions to knowledge which illustrated the seventeenth century were published. Many New-Englanders were its correspondents and diligent readers of its transactions.

In glancing along the intellectual annals of the State, we are tempted to dwell on the name of Berkeley, whose stay in Newport threw a glamour over the rocks that overhang its beach. But Berkeley was properly a philosopher, not a man of science. His two chief distinctions, apart from his moral virtues, were (1) that he cast a doubt over the objective existence of an external universe, and (2) that he believed tar-water to be a panacea for human diseases. I submit that neither of these entitles him to be ranked among the promoters of physical science.

The intellectual movement in Newport, in which Berkeley took part, and which has its still remaining monument in the Redwood library, was rather literary and philosophical than scientific. Redwood himself is said to have laid out a botanical garden containing foreign and native plants, the first in New England.

There is then little to detain us, in a close treatment of our subject, till we come down to the middle of the last century. About that time, ELECTRICITY, hitherto regarded as little more than a plaything, became a subject of scientific experiment and discovery. Franklin is said to have had his attention called to it when on a visit to Boston in 1746; and in consequence, he with his fellow-workers performed that remarkable series of experiments which first made the names of Franklin and Philadelphia familiar in Europe. They occupied much of his time

from 1746 to 1752. The editor of Franklin's Works, Dr. Sparks, attributes his first interest in the subject to what he saw in Boston, at the hands of a Dr. Spence. I think it probable, however, that quite as much of the credit of this suggestion belongs to a Newport electrician. All that Spence had to show, so far as we know, was the familiar results of rubbing on a glass tube. At the same time William Claggett, clock-maker and "artist" of Newport, had constructed a very large electrical machine. He carried this machine to Boston, and performed public experiments for the benefit of the poor. He was intimately acquainted with Franklin, who saw his apparatus when passing through Newport in 1746. After Claggett's death, his son Thomas, having occasion to ask Dr. Franklin to procure for him a cylinder for an electric apparatus, Franklin furnished it without compensation, as a mark of gratitude to the deceased father.<sup>1</sup>

It is probable then that the hint of which the great discoverer made such good use was given—in part at least—by a Newport experimenter, whose name is now almost forgotten. Claggett is said to have come to this country from Wales, and lived first in Boston. He was early involved in religious controversy, and printed at Newport, in 1721, a book entitled "A Looking-Glass for Elder Clarke and Elder Wightman and the church under their care. (Wherein is fairly represented the very image of their transactions. It being a brief but true relation of the cause and prosecution of the differences between the Baptist Church, under the pastoral care of the aforesaid Elders, and John Rhodes, Captain John Rogers, William Claggett and several others that were members of the aforesaid Church, with some remarks thereon ;)" This volume is now very rare ;—our Society possesses a copy of it. Claggett united with the First Baptist Church in Newport, under the Rev. John Callender, in November, 1733. Many of his high, old-fashioned musical clocks still mark the time in Newport, Providence and War-

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(1) Historical Discourse by Rev. Arthur A. Ross, 1838, pp. 35, 36.



wick. He died in Newport, October 18, 1749. The late Dr. David King had in his possession a part of Claggett's electrical machine, which had belonged to his father, the elder Dr. King, and previously to Dr. Isaac Senter. Dr. King came to the same conclusion as myself, that Franklin derived his interest in electricity from Claggett and his apparatus.<sup>2</sup>

As one result of this interest in electricity, the needful apparatus was owned and used for experimental purposes by many investigators. Mr. Joseph Brown, of Providence,—one of the famous four brothers—had, as we are told by his friend Benjamin West, “as curious and complete, an apparatus for electrical experiments as any perhaps in America, and of which he well knows the use.” Professor Tyler, in his most interesting “History of American Literature,” remarks: “Inspired by the noble enthusiasm of Franklin, whose position brought him into large personal acquaintance in all the colonies, the activity and the range of scientific studies in America were greatly increased.” He enumerates several of “the leading students of nature, who in colonies the most remote from one another were pushing forward similar researches, and who found in these researches a bond of scientific communion, that helped to prepare the way for political communion, whenever the hour for that should come.”

Among these names, he rather strangely omits that of one student, long a resident of Rhode Island, who is more known in other departments of learning, but who was a disciple of Franklin, and who investigated during his busy life a great variety of scientific subjects.

The Reverend DR. EZRA STILES, who resided in Newport as a Congregational clergyman, from 1755 till his pastorate was interrupted by the British occupation of Newport in the revolutionary war, was a correspondent and friend of Dr. Franklin, and performed some of the earliest known electrical experiments

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(2) Some of these facts about Claggett were told me by the late lamented Comfort E. Barrows, D. D., of Newport.



in New England, in 1749 and 1750, with apparatus sent by Dr. Franklin to Yale College where Stiles was then Tutor. He was a native of Connecticut, and from the year 1778 till his death, May 12, 1795, was President of Yale College. He was a singularly inquisitive and many-sided scholar, with a marked vein of learned credulity. He recorded and preserved his observations of the comet of 1759, whose reappearance he had correctly foretold,—also of the transits of Venus and of Mercury. His notes and calculations concerning these transits fill a quarto volume. He carefully noted the phenomena of the dark day, (May, 1780), which he thus explains :

“The darkness may be considered as a very extensive sheet of very dense cloud, stationary and suspended in the atmosphere over this and the adjacent places, there being no current of air sufficient to carry it forward. This, penetrated by the meridian solar rays, produced the yellow duskiness which overshadowed us, transfusing a yellow hue over all visible nature.”

He pushed his inquiries on geographical subjects, the distinctions and history of the races of mankind, and the chronology of the earth, with a degree of pertinacity sometimes amusing. While living at Newport, he wrote a letter to a Greek priest or bishop in Syria, propounding a long list of questions about the Holy Land, the Samaritans and their Pentateuch, the Euphrates, and country beyond the Caspian Sea, with a delicious disregard of the limitations of effort on the part of his correspondent, and the brevity of human life. About the same time (1759) he wrote a letter, also in Latin and covering many pages, to the Principal of the Jesuits' college in Mexico, desiring information in regard to discoveries made on this continent, beyond (that is north of) California. This inquiry was connected in his mind with the question of possible communication, by land, or over short distances of sea-travel, between Asia and North America. It should be remembered that, though Behring's Strait had been discovered in 1728, it was first distinctly explored and described by Captain Cook in his last voyage, 1778. A map in Salmon's "Geographical and

Historical Grammar," published in London 1749, and supposed to represent the best geographical knowledge of that time, exhibits the whole region north of California and west of the Missouri, as "unknown;" and the same work slices off the Peninsula of Kamschatka and the north-eastern extremity of Asia, leaving a wide and unknown interval between the two continents. There is no record of any answer to either of these formidable epistles. This is only a sample of his multifarious inquiries. He corresponded with Noah Webster about the works of the western mound-builders; and made one of the earliest copies (not, I believe, the most correct) of the inscription on Dighton rock, the characters of which he and his learned Parisian correspondent interpreted as denoting that the ancient Carthaginians had once visited these distant regions. All these problems were grouped around the one central question, which has perplexed historians from Hugo Grotius to Diedrich Knickerbocker,—How did the American continent first come to be peopled by human beings?

He was much concerned about the fate of the ten tribes of Israel, that disappeared after the Assyrian captivity. He ransacked the earth for them, by reading, and above all by correspondence. He expressed a most ardent desire that the interior and most remote regions of Asia, between the river Volga and the "Sinensian empire," might be thoroughly explored; for somewhere there, he believed, "these tribes had hitherto lain concealed, and would hereafter be found." He sought for traces of the persistence of Jewish customs and traits among the Tartars, and the American Indians, finally inclining to the opinion that these last represented the missing Israelites. This hobby of his, and his historical researches into the lives of the regicide judges of Charles I., who took refuge in New England, furnish the coloring of a poetical picture of the pious scholar, as he

"—With mild rapture stooped devoutly o'er

"The small, coarse leaf, alive with curious lore;

"Tales of grim judges, at whose awful beck  
"Flashed the broad blade across a royal neck;  
"Or learned dreams of Israel's long-lost child  
"Found in the wanderer of our western wild."

For more than thirty years he kept a meteorological record, filling six quarto volumes. He began this with the aid of a thermometer given him by Franklin. For many years he kept a literary diary and itinerarium, recording all sorts of historical, statistical and other curious items.

It is not to my present purpose to speak of Dr. Stiles as a theologian, a linguist, an historian, an advocate of freedom. He was an early and staunch defender of colonial rights,—and of religious liberty, as he understood it,—which meant a good, sound Congregationalist establishment, supported by public taxation, with a kindly tolerance of other denominations. His liberality extended to Jews, and he cultivated Hebrew by conversation with the Rabbi at Newport, and often attended service at the Synagogue. He lifted his voice against the slave-trade, then carried on from Newport.

On the completed conquest of Canada, in 1760, he was led to look forward to the time when "there will be formed a provincial confederacy;" and on the accession of George III. he said in a sermon :

"As there are men who have a mighty opinion of retrenching the liberties of these colonies, or throwing a net of policy over them, which may amount to a deprivation ; so if these, with their projections, should gain access to his Majesty's ears, mistaken representations may induce his Majesty to accede to measures of unhappy consequence to the liberty of America."

He deservedly finds a place in Mr. J. Wingate Thornton's collection of patriotic sermons, entitled "The Pulpit of the American Revolution."

An interleaved almanac of his, which was lately added to the collections of this Society, contains this entry in his handwriting, under date of February 13, 1789: "General Ethan Allen of Vermont died and went to hell this day." No doubt as to the dead hero's immediate doom, no thought of possible

respite, or *post-mortem* probation, disturbed the genial current of his soul.

The earliest public scientific teaching that I know of, in this State, was in the lectures on anatomy given in the State House at Newport, by Dr. WILLIAM HUNTER. He was of Scotch birth, and a cousin of the pre-eminent British physiologist and surgeon, John Hunter. He was a youth of sixteen, studying at Edinburgh, when the Pretender Charles Edward reached that city, on his way toward England; the wave of enthusiasm swept along young Hunter as it did many older men, and he shared in the rout of Culloden. He was afterward allowed to pursue his studies peacefully at Edinburgh, and also at Leyden, and was a pupil of the eminent anatomist Monro. He came to Newport, probably in the year 1752, and became very successful as a surgeon and physician. His knowledge of anatomy, more exact than possessed perhaps by any surgeon in the colonies, especially qualified him for success in operative surgery. His medical library and outfit of surgical instruments were believed to be the richest in New England. In 1755 he served as surgeon in an expedition against Crown Point.

The date of his lectures at Newport is somewhat variously stated: Dr. Thacher says they were given in the years 1754, 5 and 6. They treated not merely of human anatomy, but the history of the science, and comparative anatomy,—subjects indicating a much broader outlook, both historical and philosophical, than would be required in a purely descriptive course. They are reputed to have been the first lectures on the subject in New England, and probably in America. As public lectures, this was true, I suppose. But, more than a century earlier, Giles Firmin, Jr., who had been a student at Cambridge, England, had in Massachusetts, as we are told by the Indian apostle Eliot, “an anatomy which he did make and read

upon very well." That is, probably, he taught a little company, perhaps of the early students of Harvard college, with the bones of an "anatomy" in hand. The earliest known attempt in the colonies, to prepare the blood-vessels for study, by dissection and preservation, and to render these preparations useful to students, was at New York, in 1750. Dr. Middleton, a Scotch associate of Hunter, who also had seen service under the Pretender, took part in these demonstrations.

Hunter enjoyed much social distinction in Newport. He was the first person to divine the genius of young Gilbert Stuart, and to give him a commission,—(to paint a picture of two dogs). He was a loyalist, was ordered to be sent to Smithfield in 1776, but was allowed to return, and died in Newport, January 30, 1777, of a fever contracted in attendance on prisoners of war. He was father of the late Hon. William Hunter.

The earliest known example of original observation, conceived in a scientific spirit, carefully prepared for, and successfully carried out and published, was that of the TRANSIT OF VENUS, June 3, 1769. These transits were only a matter of astronomical curiosity until Halley, in 1717, showed that if observed by different persons at remote points on the earth's surface, they gave the means of ascertaining, through calculations based on the solar parallax, the diameter of the earth and its distance from the sun. This result, invested with practical interest from its application to the art of navigation, gave a new importance to observations of the transit which occurred in 1761. These were made in every quarter of the globe, those in America being conducted in Newfoundland, by John Winthrop, F. R. S., at the expense of the Massachusetts province. But errors and imperfections in these led to great preparation for the next transit, eight years later. Skilful observers betook themselves to remote points. Captain Cook's first voyage of



circumnavigation was undertaken with this view, and the transit was observed from the island of Tahiti.

Dr. Stiles wrote in his diary at Newport :

" May 23. Engaged in preparing for the transit of Venus.

" May 25. Engaged in taking equal altitudes, &c., &c.

" May 26. Getting an astronomical sextant made.

" May 27. Last evening let down two threads pendant from my garret windows, and affixed weights at the bottom, and immersed them in two vessels of water ; then ranged them to Alioth and the pole-star. This noon, regulated the two clocks by the meridian.

" June 1. Finished sextant for observing the transit of Venus.

" June 3. Fine, serene day. Assiduously employed in observing Transit of Venus, which will not happen again in above a hundred years at either node ; at this depending node, not again in two hundred and forty years."

In the town of Providence, there chanced to be an alliance of astronomical and mathematical knowledge, practical foresight, ingenuity, and ample pecuniary means, which without aid from State or college, sought to improve this opportunity. The mathematician of the time and place was Benjamin West, a native of Rehoboth, Massachusetts, and long a resident of Providence. He was born in March, 1730, the son of a farmer, had only three months' schooling, but early showed great mathematical gifts. When he was a boy his father removed to Bristol, and young West is said to have been aided by books which Bishop Berkeley left behind him, and which were distributed among the clergy. He became a school-teacher, tradesman and bookseller in Providence, and was engaged in manufacturing clothing for the revolutionary army. He published an almanac from 1763 till about the year 1793, making therefor the necessary astronomical calculations. The year after his observations on the transit, he received from Harvard college the honorary degree of Master of Arts. In 1786, he was appointed Professor of Mathematics and Astronomy in Rhode Island college, and he held that office till 1798. He was invited to professorships in other colleges. Through



life he continued to be engaged in mathematical and astronomical problems. In 1802, he was appointed postmaster of Providence, and died August 26, 1813. A memoir of him is in Rhode Island Literary Repository, October, 1814.

In preparations for observing the transit, he was aided by the brothers Joseph and Moses Brown, by Stephen Hopkins, who united scientific attainments to his great political ability and foresight, by Dr. Jabez Bowen, one of the eminent family of physicians, by Mr. Joseph Nash and Captain John Burrough. He writes :

“Mr Joseph Brown’s expense in this laudable undertaking, was little less than One Hundred Pounds sterling, besides near a month’s time of himself and servants, in making the necessary previous experiments and preparations.”

An account of these observations was published in a pamphlet of twenty-two pages, now rare, and bearing the following title : “An account of the observation of Venus upon the Sun, the Third day of June, 1769, at Providence, in New England, with some account of the use of those observations. By Benjamin West. The course of Nature is the Art of God. Providence, MDCCLXIX.” It is dedicated to Stephen Hopkins, Esquire. In the dedication, West remarks :

“From these observations we expect to discover the distance of the Earth, the Planets and Comets, from the Sun ; and consequently their magnitudes and quantity of matter will be known, as also their proportion of light and heat :— These things being once known, Astronomers in future will be able, from the like observations, to discover whether the Earth and Planets approach the Sun, or recede from him ; and whether the Sun be diminished by its constant expense of light and heat.”

He portrays the anxious care with which the apparatus was obtained or constructed, and the accuracy of each instrument was tested, and offers us this pleasant glimpse of the little group of observers on the eventful June day.

“Being in this readiness, the morning of the third of June was ushered in with that serenity the business of the day required ; all was calm and not a cloud to be seen. The gentlemen concerned in the business convened very early at the place

of observation, to see that everything was in order ; and at the sight of such a morning, the gladness of their hearts was visibly expressed by a pleasant aspect upon their countenance,"

Transit street gets its name from that day's work. The observatory extemporized for the occasion stood near the line of that street, a little east of Benefit street.

The Revolutionary War turned men's hearts and minds into a very different direction, interrupted the teaching of the young college at Providence, and scattered the parishioners of Dr. Stiles. Soon after its close, a new era of instruction begins, ushered in by a native of Rhode Island, whom in his advanced years I have seen and heard. This was DR. BENJAMIN WATERHOUSE. I shall speak of him at somewhat greater length than would belong to a perfectly symmetrical treatment of my subject.

Dr. Benjamin Waterhouse was the son of Judge Timothy Waterhouse of Newport, and was born in Newport, March 4, 1754, with a birthright in the Society of Friends. He began his medical studies under Drs. Hunter and Haliburton. He was a companion of Gilbert Stuart, who was a year or two younger. The two practised drawing together from the life, hiring a "strong-muscled blacksmith" as a model. At the age of just twenty-one, when the Revolutionary War was about breaking out, young Waterhouse sailed for England, (March, 1775,) to be under the guidance and instruction of Dr. John Fothergill of London, who was his maternal relative, and a most admirable man and truly beloved physician, and an honored member of the Society of Friends. In London, he renewed his intimacy with Gilbert Stuart, and kept up his practice of drawing. "I was often to him," writes Waterhouse, "what Rembrandt's mother was to that wonderful Dutchman, an object at hand on which to exercise a ready pencil." Stu-

art's portrait of Waterhouse in Redwood library, was probably painted at this time.

Dr. Fothergill took a deep interest in political affairs, was intimately acquainted with Dr Franklin, and sympathized with the colonies in the great struggle. "Who can wonder," wrote Waterhouse at a later date, "that Medicine and Politics were mixed together in a young, ardent and anxious brain, far distant from his suffering country?"

Fothergill, in addition to the cares of a large practice, cultivated the sciences of chemistry and botany, and had an extensive garden at Upton, near London, for which he imported great numbers of plants from distant continents. Waterhouse was also acquainted with William Curtis, who for many years kept a botanic garden in different parts of the west of London, parts long since swallowed up in the growth of that enormous metropolis. This garden was a place of fashionable and even royal resort. In his company, young Waterhouse collected and studied plants growing in regions then rural in the outskirts of London. He thus laid the foundation of knowledge afterward to be made useful in the chief seat of learning in his native state. He used to jog round with Dr. Fothergill on his medical visits. He continued his studies at the more famous schools of Edinburgh and Leyden. The ample collections which still attract and detain the traveller of scientific tastes in those old university towns helped to give the young American student his inclination to the pursuit of anatomy, zoölogy and botany. At Leyden, he inscribed himself on the books of the university as "*Liberæ Reipublicæ Americanæ Foederatæ civis.*" The British Ambassador in Holland objected to this, as the Revolution was not yet (1778) completed and acknowledged; and Waterhouse afterward styled himself simply *Americanus*. In vacations he travelled extensively on the continent of Europe. Dr. Fothergill was so well acquainted with the charms of Newport as to advise Waterhouse to make that his permanent home, believing that it would always be the resort of invalids from the less healthy south. He also recommended him to make a

description of Rhode Island the subject of his dissertation at graduating; "but," writes Waterhouse, "my knowledge was then too scanty." Fothergill died December 26, 1780; and Dr. Franklin wrote Waterhouse, from Paris, a letter of condolence on the loss of one whom he styles "the worthiest of men." He took his medical degree at the University of Leyden.

He returned to his native land by way of the West Indies. On his passage from Havana to Philadelphia, he was taken and carried into New York by a British vessel-of-war; his property was soon restored to him; the General Assembly gave him leave to bring goods from New York to Rhode Island; and he reached his home in Newport early in the year 1782. He had been absent seven years, and was no doubt one of the most accomplished young men in his profession in New England.

In the autumn of that year, he was elected a Fellow of Rhode Island College, (now Brown University.) In 1783, he and Rev. Dr. Stillman, with President Manning, were appointed to solicit aid for the college from His Most Christian Majesty, Louis XVI. of France, with the view of establishing a professorship of French language, literature and history. Their memorial, addressed to the king, was very skilfully written; it dwells on the friendly alliance between the two nations, and the desire of cultivating a knowledge of French history and character, without being dependent on English authorities. But the French government, about that time, had enough to occupy it at home. In 1784, he was appointed professor of natural history in the same institution. This was the earliest professorship established in any New England college under this or any equivalent title; and his lectures were, as he claimed, "the first in this new world on Natural History in general, and Mineralogy and Botany in particular." They were begun in 1785, and continued till 1791. He began these labors without salary. Under the title "Heads of a course of lectures," a broad side, of which there are copies both in our own library and in that of Brown University, shows what was the scope of his instruction. It indicates more study of books than

of nature at first hand, and more disposition to wander over a sea of varied suggestions than to the condensed and systematic statement of facts and principles.

In 1783, the Medical School of Harvard University was founded at Cambridge, with at first two Professors, Dr. John Warren of anatomy and surgery, and Dr. Waterhouse of the theory and practice of medicine. The following year, Dr. Aaron Dexter was added, in the department of chemistry and materia medica. The compensation of instruction was at first entirely dependent on fees from students, and the whole department was based, in the words of President Quincy, "on the uncertain grounds of hope and expectation." Dr. Waterhouse soon became a resident of Cambridge, where he lived for more than sixty years. His inaugural address on beginning his professorship was in Latin. He published it in 1829, with a preface in which he betrays a sense of ill appreciated merit. His inaugural "fixes the era of an historical fact not to be found in the records of the University."

"That the origin of the second school of medicine in America should have been publicly celebrated, before the highest civil authorities of the Commonwealth,—clerical and literary bodies,—with a festive entertainment, and by illuminations of all the college-buildings, and yet no record be made of the installation, must surprise all those unacquainted with the remissness of times past."

In 1812, he was succeeded by the late Dr. James Jackson. He thought himself a much injured man, when this change was made, and I think it quite possible that the many admirable and winning qualities of Dr. Jackson, the respect and love with which his name was cherished by three generations, may have led to an inadequate estimate of his predecessor in this chair.

Dr. Waterhouse traced his own medical lineage to the illustrious Professor of Leyden, Boerhaave, whose influence long dominated that school and the memory of whose strong personality still broods over its museums and hospitals and gardens. He died forty years before Waterhouse was there. Boerhaave belongs in some respects rather to the middle than



the modern age. He deduced medical doctrines from mechanical and chemical premises or postulates. His reasoning was *deductive*, rather than *inductive*. But with all his mediæval theorising he united the sagacity and insight of the true physician. Probably, as in the common anecdote of a judge more wise than learned, his decisions were surer than his logic. I fear that Waterhouse inherited the erudition rather than the sagacity, and was more learned than practical. But, if this was generally true of him, one illustrious exception has made his name famous, and entitles him to grateful remembrance.

From his youth, he had been interested in measures for the prevention of small-pox. He communicated an account of laws and regulations for that purpose in America, to Dr. Haygarth of London, and his letter on the subject was printed in London in 1782.

The closing years of the last century were marked by one of the most signal events in the history of medicine. In 1798, Dr. Edward Jenner published his "Inquiry into the causes and effects of the Variolæ Vaccinæ or Cow-pox," which introduced vaccination to the English world. This book reached Dr. Waterhouse at the beginning of the year 1799, through his London correspondent, Dr. Lettson. He appears to have immediately foreseen its importance, and he published a communication in a Boston newspaper, the *Columbian Centinel*, dated March 12, 1799, and entitled, "SOMETHING CURIOUS IN THE MEDICAL LINE,"—the first public notice of the subject in this country. He made diligent inquiry of other English physicians and wrote another newspaper article about it in November, 1799. On the eighth of July, 1800, having received the material from England, he performed the first vaccination in America, on his own son, five years old. Late in 1800, he issued a pamphlet on the subject, by which it appears that he had already vaccinated fifty or sixty persons, of whom three were his own children. He published a longer tract in 1802. By that time, he could report several cases where persons previously vaccinated were inoculated with small-pox material, and the disease did not



follow, or was shorn of its virulence. The discovery was thus established, at once and forever in the public mind, and in medical practice, and Dr. Waterhouse deservedly received the appellation of the "American Jenner."

He soon began a correspondence with Dr. Jenner, which continued for many years. In 1801, he sent some vaccine material received from Jenner, to President Jefferson, who used it successfully in his own family and studied the laws of vaccination with his usual acumen. He wrote Waterhouse that he had fixed on "8 times 24 hours" as the period which the vaccine disease should be allowed to mature itself and be ready for propagation. Waterhouse claimed to have sacrificed his private business to the diffusion of this practice. He was charged by some with selfishness, in not sending vaccine material to all who asked it; but this seems to have been only a proper precaution to prevent disaster to individual patients, or to the cause he was seeking to promote. He seems to have had a faculty of being in opposition. He was a political partisan and correspondent of Jefferson, at a time when that illustrious name was not in favor in the most influential circles in Boston. In 1807, Jefferson appointed him to the care of the Marine Hospital at that port; and in the war of 1812, he was medical superintendent of military posts in New England. He is said to have been once solicited to be candidate of his party for the office of governor, but replied, that he had office enough, —he was lieutenant-governor in his own household.

Dr. Waterhouse was very fond of writing and appearing in print. He published notes of his lectures upon different subjects. Those on botany were published in *Monthly Anthology*, Boston, 1804–1808, and expanded into a volume, "*The Botanist*," in 1811. This is even now a readable book, with more or less of his personal history in it, and an interesting review of the progress of the science. For him the last word in systematic botany and zoölogy was that of Linnaeus.

In 1831, he published a volume in which he endeavored to prove that the Earl of Chatham was author of the *Letters of*

Junius. This book, which he presented to our library, is very discursive, and gives an interesting and animated account of the early years of George III.'s reign, the influences behind the throne, and in other respects is lively historical reading, its style though diffuse not lacking in point and vigor.

To his latest years, he cherished a great fondness for the beautiful island of his birth. He published in the Boston Intelligencer, 1824, a notice of Newport as he remembered it, and especially of the physicians and scholars who had given lustre to its social and professional life, before the Revolution. These notices have been often quoted. He wrote that :

“Metallurgical Chemistry was perhaps as well known, if not better, at that period in Rhode Island, as in any city in the English colonies. At that time there were more and more complete laboratories in Rhode Island than were to be found in Massachusetts prior to fifteen years ago.”

At the age of almost eighty, he wrote to a gentleman in Newport, suggesting modes of increasing the usefulness of the Redwood Library, and proposing the formation of a Museum of natural history and lectures in connection with it. The following sentences are characteristic enough to be worth preserving :

“Commence a Musoeum, by collecting and preserving the very numerous *fishes* of Rhode Island, which can be easily preserved and by due care kept free from vermin ;—make also a collection of stuffed birds—and shells of all kinds, and indeed every production of nature. If I do not mistake, Mr. Hunter has a valuable folio book on Fishes by Redi.—From these you may go to insects, including butterflies.—*Only begin* and you will be surprised how a collection will grow to respectability. BEGIN, and remember the potent efficacy of ‘*le premier pas.*’ Remember that the greatest body was once in embryo, therefore begin.

“Allow me to recommend *Lyceum* Lectures to the gentlemen of Newport, and that on any subject except politics, religion, or the *mystic tie*, or anything savoring of party.—I was the first who commenced the all-important subject of Natural History by giving a few lectures at Providence College in the year 1785 ; and from that small beginning, see how that department of knowledge has grown and spread throughout the Union.

Therefore I say—Begin, and echo the truth that the *greatest body was once in embryo!*

“To show that I am in earnest. I will do my part and assist in the business.—I will, if my health and faculties should be spared six months longer, come to Newport, and give you a Lecture or two by way of aiding in the good cause which you have been the means of suggesting.”

My own remembrance of Dr. Waterhouse is very indistinct; but I can quote a description of him by an older Cambridge boy than myself,—James Russell Lowell:

“His queue, slender and tapering like the tail of a violet-crab, was held out horizontally by the high collar of his shepherd’s-grey overcoat, whose style was of the latest when he studied at Leyden in his hot youth. He wore amazing spectacles, fit to transmit no smaller image than the page of mightiest folios, and rising full-disked upon the beholder, like those prodigies of two moons at once, portending change to monarchs. The great collar, disallowing any independent rotation of the head, I remember he used to turn his whole person in order to bring their *foci* to bear upon an object. One can fancy that terrified Nature would have yielded up her secrets at once, without cross-examination, at their first glare.”

Or, here is Dr. Holmes’ picture of him:

“A brisk, dapper old gentleman, with hair tied in a ribbon behind, and I think powdered, marching smartly about with gold-headed cane, with a look of questioning sagacity, and an utterance of oracular gravity,—the good people of Cambridge listened to his learned talk when they were well, and sent for one of the other two doctors when they were sick.”

Dr. Waterhouse died at Cambridge, October 2, 1846, aged 92.<sup>1</sup>

In conclusion,—We cannot chronicle any great discovery or advance in physical science to give lustre to Rhode Island history. But we may certainly claim that Rhode Island furnished, from the pen of her founder, the earliest American contribution to philology—and that she took part in suggesting the first great

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(1)For notices of the personal history of Waterhouse, see his writings, *passim*.

physical discovery made in these colonies, that of the relations of electricity to lightning. I believe that we may assert that the first botanical garden, cultivated for scientific purposes, the first lectures on anatomy, and the first professorship of natural history, in New England, were here. And lastly we have seen that a native of Newport, whose medical education was begun in that town and "ripened in the skies of many lands," was the first American to perceive the importance of vaccination, began its introduction by submitting his own child to the repulsive experiment, and succeeded in establishing it, through doubt and obloquy, in general and lasting confidence. If we could continue our study down to more recent times, we should find more achievements to record, either in pure science, or in its applications to the arts and commodities of life.



THE FIRST COMMENCEMENT OF RHODE ISLAND  
COLLEGE, AND ESPECIALLY THE DISCUS-  
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BY REUBEN A. GUILD, LL. D.





## THE FIRST COMMENCEMENT OF RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE, AND AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE.

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The Continental Congress, in the earlier months of 1776, had been steadily drifting on towards the distinct assertion of separate sovereignty, and had declared it irreconcilable with reason and a good conscience for the colonists to take the oaths required for the support of the government under the crown of Great Britain, but it was not until the 7th of June, that Richard Henry Lee, of Virginia, rose and read these resolutions :

“That these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved.”

“That it is expedient forthwith to take the most effectual measures for forming foreign alliances.”

“That a plan of confederation be prepared and transmitted to the respective colonies for their consideration and approbation.”

These resolutions, which were presented under direct instructions from the Virginia Assembly, were at once seconded by John Adams, of Massachusetts, Virginia and Massachusetts being then the leading colonies. It was a bold measure to advocate, for success was regarded as doubtful, and certain death awaited the leaders in case of failure. It was for this reason, doubtless, that Congress directed the secretary to omit from the Journals the names of Lee and Adams, the mover and seconder of these resolutions. The consideration of them was deferred until the following morning.

On the next day, Saturday, June 8, 1776, the discussion of them came up, and was continued on Monday. They were opposed, even with bitterness, by Robert Livingston, of New York, by Dickinson and Wilson, of Pennsylvania, and by Rutledge, of South Carolina. The latter is reported to have said privately, "that it required the impudence of a New Englander, for them in their disjointed state to propose a treaty to a nation now at peace; that no reason could be assigned for pressing into this measure, but the reason of every madman, a show of spirit." On the other hand John Adams defended the resolutions, as stating "objects of the most stupendous magnitude, in which the lives and liberties of millions yet unborn were intimately interested."

Notwithstanding the opposition at the beginning, the opinions of the majority in Congress proved to be clear and strong, and the pressure from their constituencies was yet stronger. Nearly every colony had already taken separate action toward independence. North Carolina was the first to take a bold progressive step, at the Mecklenburg Convention in May, 1775, and again in April, 1776. Massachusetts took a similar step during the same month. Virginia, Rhode Island, New York, Connecticut, New Hampshire and New Jersey, soon followed with resolutions instructing their delegates in Congress to vote for independence. On the 4th of July, 1776, a unanimous vote of the thirteen colonies was given in favor of the GREAT DECLARATION, which pronounced them free and independent states.

‡ What the leading colonies and statesmen were so slow to perceive, and so cautious to advance in 1775 and in 1776, was clearly set forth in almost the very arguments of the Declaration, by a pupil of President Manning and Tutor Howell, as early as 1769, at a commencement discussion in the town of Warren, before a crowded and approving audience. Thus the state of Rhode Island has the double honor of having advocated in advance the doctrines of civil and religious freedom and of American independence. It was one of her sons, too, a firm

friend and benefactor of the college, who as a leader in the affairs of the "Gaspee," shed the first blood of the Revolution. Before proceeding with the discussion, let me invite your attention to a few preliminary remarks respecting the college.

Brown University, the oldest and best endowed institution of learning connected with the Baptist denomination, dates back for its origin to a period anterior to the American Revolution, when in all the thirteen colonies there were less than seventy Baptist churches, with perhaps four thousand communicants. It is not surprising that, at the memorable meeting of the Philadelphia Association, held on the 12th of October, 1762, when the members were finally led to regard it, in the words of Backus, as "practicable and expedient to erect a College in the Colony of Rhode Island, under the chief direction of the Baptists, in which education might be promoted and superior learning obtained, free from any sectarian tests," the mover in the matter should at first have been laughed at, the thing being looked upon as, under the circumstances an utter impossibility. But leaders at that time, like Morgan Edwards and Isaac Eaton, Samuel Jones, Abel Morgan, Benjamin Griffith, John Sutton and John Gano, were men of faith. The attempt to introduce learning in the denomination through the Hopewell Academy had proved so far a success, but they felt that their rapidly growing churches needed something higher and better than a mere academy, and they wisely determined to secure it if within the reach of possibilities.

It is true that the college of New Jersey had been recently established at Princeton, under the auspices of that branch of the Presbyterian Church the Synod of New York, which sympathized with Whitefield and Tenent, and favored the "New Lights," as revivalists were then called; it is true, too, that the first presidents, Dickinson, Burr, Edwards, Davies and Finley, were devout men of liberal and comprehensive views; still they were Presbyterians, and the college was a Presbyterian college.

At the time of which I speak, there was graduated from Princeton, with the second honors of his class, a man of won-

derful mental and physical endowments, an early pupil of Isaac Eaton at Hopewell, James Manning, of Elizabethtown, New Jersey. To him the enterprise of the college was by common consent intrusted. The story of his arrival at Newport in the summer of 1763, on the mission of the association, of his efforts to enlist the leading men of the place in the new movement, and of his final success, I need not here detail. It has long since passed into history; and it now forms a part of the permanent record.

The first commencement of the college, which was held in the then new Baptist meeting-house of the town of Warren, on the 7th of September, 1769, has always been regarded as a *Red Letter Day* in its history. Five years previous, the General Assembly, "begun and holden by adjournment at East Greenwich, on the last Monday in February, 1764," after various difficulties and delays, in consequence of the determined opposition of those who were unfriendly to the movement, had granted a charter for a "College or University in the English Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, in New England in America."

Such is the language of the act of incorporation. But though Rhode Island had been selected for its home by the original projectors of the institution, and a liberal and ample charter had thus been secured, the college itself was still in embryo. Without funds, without students, and with no present prospect of support, a beginning must be made where the president could be the pastor of a church, and thus obtain an adequate compensation for his services. Warren, then as now, a delightful and flourishing inland town, situated ten miles from Providence, seemed to meet the requisite requirements, and thither, accordingly, Manning removed with his family in the spring of 1764. He at once commenced a Latin School, as the first step preparatory to the work of college instruction. Before the close of the year a church was organized, over which he was duly installed as pastor. The following year, at the second annual meeting of the corporation, held

in Newport, Wednesday, September 3d, he was formally elected, in the language of the records, "President of the College, Professor of Languages and other branches of learning, with full power to act in these capacities at Warren or elsewhere." On that same day, as appears from a paper now on file in the archives of the Library, the president matriculated his first student, William Rogers, a lad of fourteen, the son of Captain William Rogers, of Newport. Not only was this lad the first student of the college, but he was also the first freshman class. Indeed, for a period of nine months and seventeen days, as appears from the paper already referred to, he constituted the entire BODY OF STUDENTS. From such feeble beginnings has the University sprung. Truly it is an insignificant acorn that has become the mighty oak, with sturdy trunk and wide spreading branches.

On the 20th of June, 1776, the freshman class, which had now become the sophomore, was enlarged by the addition of a second student, Richard Stites, of New Jersey, a brother-in-law of the president. Four more joined the class in November following, viz: Joseph Belton, of Connecticut, and Joseph Eaton, William Williams and Charles Thompson, from Isaac Eaton's Academy in Hopewell, New Jersey. The seventh and last member of this first graduating class, was James Mitchel Varnum, who was admitted on the 23d of May, 1768. Why he should have left the venerated halls of Harvard to connect himself with the infant seminary at Warren, has always seemed to me a mystery. Perhaps the solution of it may be found in President Quincy's history. In April, 1768, the writer states, there were serious disturbances at Harvard. Tutors' windows were broken in, other outrages were committed, and lives were endangered. Three undergraduates were expelled, others were rusticated, and several ring-leaders gave up their chambers and severed their connections with the college. Mr. Varnum may have been implicated in these disturbances. Doubtless he was, for his biographer states that he was wild and somewhat dissipated in his youth. The date of his admission to Rhode Island



College certainly favors this supposition. Furthermore, he may have become dissatisfied with his senior instruction at Harvard. President Holyoke, who had been in office since 1737, was now an old man, in his eightieth year, and in feeble health. Indeed he died the year following. On the other hand, he had probably heard through Hezekiah Smith, who was then preaching at Haverhill with wonderful power and success, and who was a welcome visitor at his father's house in Dracut, of the remarkable gifts of the youthful President Manning, and of his associate instructor, Tutor Howell, better known in Providence annals as Hon. Judge Howell.

The first Wednesday in September, 1769, was a day long to be remembered. Through toils, and difficulties, and opposition even, the president, instructor and pastor, had quietly persevered in his work, until the seminary under his care had won its way to the public favor. And now his first pupils were about to take their Bachelor's degree in the arts, and to go forth to the duties of life. They were young men of promise. Some of them were destined to fill conspicuous places in the approaching struggle for independence; others were to be leaders in the church, and distinguished educators of youth. Probably no class that has been graduated from the University in her palmiest days of prosperity, has exerted so widely an extended and so beneficial an influence, the times and circumstances taken into consideration, as this class of seven, that was graduated at Warren. The occasion drew together a large concourse of people from all parts of the colony, inaugurating, says Arnold, the earliest state holiday in the history of Rhode Island. "And as each recurring anniversary," continues the historian, "of this time honored institution of learning calls together from distant places the widely scattered alumni of Brown University, we do but renew, on a more extended scale, the congratulations that crowned this earliest festival." A full account of the exercises<sup>1</sup> was published in the *Providence*

(1) The printed order of exercises, which was a folio sheet, in Latin, has been preserved in the archives of the Library, together with the exercises from

*Gazette.* As an illustration of the spirit of the times, and of the feelings of the people in regard to unjust taxes and imported goods, it is added in conclusion, that "not only the candidates but even the president, were dressed in American manufactures."

The usual Latin salutatory was pronounced by Mr. Stites, a copy<sup>1</sup> of which is preserved in the archives of the College Library. It is a carefully written and scholarly production, one that would not be discreditable, even at the present day, to a pupil of the accomplished editor of Horace and Livy. A contemporary states that it was delivered with much spirit, and that it procured the author great applause from the learned part of the assembly. After a suitable introduction, he speaks of liberty and learning, dwelling upon the advantages of each, and their mutual dependence, and concluding with proper salutations to the governor of the colony, Joseph Wanton; the chancellor of the college, Stephen Hopkins; the corporation of the college; President Manning; Tutor Howell; and especially the Rev. Morgan Edwards, who had just returned from England, where he had procured books for the Library and funds for the endowment of the College. "Sed precipue tibi, Reverando honestissimoque viro Domino Edwards, permaximae grates sunt habendae, ob meritum tuum erga hanc academiam in maria terrasque transcendendo causa donatores sollicitandi." It is a singular fact, and it may perhaps be stated in this connection, that the first funds of the College were obtained from Ireland, in guineas and half-guineas, from Mary Murphy, Susanna Pilson, Joseph Fowke, and other members of protestant churches and societies in Cork, Waterford, Belfast, Ballymony, Coleraine, Londonderry and Dublin. This may be accounted for, when

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year to year, down to the present time. They form a valuable and instructive portion of the college history.

(1) A time worn and faded manuscript, containing all the orations and discussions delivered at this memorable first Commencement. It is in the handwriting of Charles Thompson, the Valedictorian. It came into my possession many years ago, soon after the publication of my life of President Manning.

we learn that Mr. Edwards' first settlement in the ministry, before coming to this country was in Cork, where he married his wife, (Mary Nunn). The original subscription book, with genuine signatures, is one of the most interesting documents on file in connection with the early history of the University. In regard to the first Latin salutatory, candor compels me to state that it very closely resembles the one delivered by President Manning, upon his graduation at Princeton in 1762, a copy of which in the original hand-writing has been preserved. Mr. Stites, it may be added, studied medicine after leaving college, and become a successful practitioner in his native state. The Rev. Dr. Gano, for so many years the pastor of the First Baptist Church in Providence, studied with him, it is said, with the original intention of entering the medical profession.

The first oration in the afternoon, together with the valedictory addresses, was given by Mr. Thompson. I hold in my hands the original manuscript. It was obtained years ago, from a descendant<sup>1</sup> then living at Warren. Before graduating, the author had already commenced preaching. Upon the removal of the college to Providence, in 1770, he succeeded Manning as pastor of the church. During the war of the Revolution he served as brigade chaplain. While on a visit to his home in Warren, on the morning of May 25, 1778, the English troops from Newport burned the meeting-house, parsonage, arsenal, and several private dwellings, and carried away Mr. Thompson as a prisoner. After the war he preached in several places with great power and success. He died in Charlton, Massachusetts, in the year 1803, at the age of fifty-five. As a preacher he undoubtedly ranked among the first. He was very successful in the instruction of youth, and was fully master of whatever he attempted to teach. In truth he may be regarded, says his biographer, as an accomplished scholar, a devout Christian and an able minister of the gospel. An oration on

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(1) Miss Louisa H. Thompson, a daughter of Dr. William Thompson, of Warren, and granddaughter of Rev. Charles Thompson. She died in 1875, at an advanced age.

Benevolence, by Mr. Rogers, served as a conclusion to the exercises of the forenoon. The author after graduating, returned to his home in Newport, where for several years, he engaged in teaching. In 1772, he removed to Philadelphia, and was ordained as pastor of the First Baptist church. Here he became noted for his eloquence, attracting to his church and congregation large numbers, among others, it is said, the celebrated Dr. Rush. During the war he rendered good service as a brigade chaplain in the continental army. He was an honored member of the Masonic Fraternity, and an intimate friend of Washington.<sup>1</sup> In 1789, he was appointed professor of oratory and *belles-lettres*, in the college and academy of Philadelphia, and in 1792, he was elected to the same office in the University of Pennsylvania. In 1790, he received the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity. He died on the 7th of April, 1824, universally beloved and lamented. If among her "first fruits," Trinity College of Dublin may boast of her Archbishop Usher, and Harvard College of her Dr. Woodbridge, surely Brown University may with equal propriety boast of her Dr. Rogers, as the first student who enrolled his name upon the records, and as one whose character and life reflect the highest honor alike upon his revered instructor and the institution over which he presided. It is pleasant to state, in this connection, that the late William Sanford Rogers, of Boston, who died in 1872, bequeathed to the University the sum of fifty thousand dollars, to found the "Newport Rogers Professorship of Chemistry," in memory, so reads his will, of his uncle, Dr. Rogers, a member of the first graduating class, and of his father, Robert Rogers, who was graduated in 1775.

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(1) In Evan's life of Rev. William Richards, LL.D., may be found a pleasant account of Dr. Rogers, as given by an English gentleman who was travelling through this country in 1793. This account which I have introduced in my sketch of Rogers, (Manning and Brown University, page 93) serves to illustrate his social position, and also gives an agreeable view of Gen. Washington in his private relations.

The prominent feature of the day, was a Discussion on American Independence, between James Mitchell Varnum and William Williams. This occupied a good part of the forenoon. Mr. Varnum, or as he is termed in this "Forensic Dispute" the "Respondent," was born in Dracut, Massachusetts, in the year 1749. His father was a large land owner on the banks of the Merrimac, and a man of influence in the community where he resided. The son early developed a remarkable capacity for learning, and although, as his biographer states, somewhat dissipated in his habits, made liberal acquisitions in general knowledge and literature. He was especially attached to mathematical science, and delighted in its pursuit. After leaving college he taught a classical school; and to this period of his life he ever afterwards referred, as a season of special benefit. In the year 1771, he was admitted to the bar, having studied law in the office of Oliver Arnold, Esq., then the Attorney General of the colony. Soon afterwards he established himself in the town of East Greenwich,<sup>1</sup> where he rapidly rose to distinction in his profession. The following extract from the "Memoirs of Elkanah Watson," presents a pleasing description of his powers of eloquence at this period:—

"Mr. Varnum, he says, was one of the most eminent lawyers and distinguished orators in the colonies. I first saw this learned and amiable man in 1774, when I heard him deliver a Masonic oration. Until that moment I had formed no conception of the power and charms of oratory. I was so deeply impressed, that the effect of his splendid exhibition has remained indelibly fixed upon my mind. \* \* \* Lavater would have pronounced him an orator, from the vivid flashing of his eye, and the delicate beauty of his classic mouth."

Mr. Varnum had a decided taste for military life, and in 1774 was appointed commander of the "Kentish Guards;" a

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(1) A short time before the breaking out of hostilities he built him a house, which was regarded as one of the finest residences in the colony. This is still standing, being owned and occupied by Dr. Bowen. Here the owner in 1779, entertained in great state Gen. Nathaniel Greene, Gen. Lafayette, Gen. Sullivan, and other distinguished officers of the American and French army.



company which, from their acquirements in military tactics, became the nursery of many distinguished officers, including Major Whitmarsh, Col. Christopher Greene and Gen. Nathaniel Greene. Upon the breaking out of hostilities, he at once offered his services to the government. He was appointed colonel in the American army, and in February, 1777, he was promoted to the rank of brigadier general. In 1779, he resigned his commission and returned to his profession. The following year he was appointed a delegate to the Congress of the Confederation, and again in 1786. His great forensic effort was in the celebrated case of *Trevett versus Weeden*, in which, by his resistless eloquence, he stemmed the tide of power and misrule, and successfully vindicated the claims of equity and justice. In the year 1787, he was appointed by congress one of the judges of the North Western Territory. But disease had enfeebled his constitution, and in the month of January, 1789, he died, at the early age of forty. A beautiful and touching letter, written from his sick chamber, to his wife Martha, daughter of Cromel Child, of Warren, was published in the Massachusetts Magazine for November, 1790, with a note from President Manning prefixed.<sup>1</sup>

A younger brother, Joseph Bradley Varnum, I may here add, also, served as brigadier general in the war, and was especially prominent in Massachusetts politics. He was a member of the State Senate, House of Representatives, and Council. He was for sixteen years a member of Congress, serving two terms as speaker of the House, and from 1811 to 1817 he was a member of the United States Senate. He was also a member of the Baptist Church in Draeut.

Mr. Williams, or as he is termed in this "Forensic Dispute," the "Opponent," was born in Hilltown, Pennsylvania, in the year 1752. His father emigrated from Wales, and settling in this country as a farmer, accumulated a handsome property.

(1) This letter may also be found in "Manning and Brown University," pp. 100-102.



The son, as has already been remarked, was fitted for college at the then celebrated Hopewell Academy. In the autumn following his graduation he married, at the early age of eighteen, a daughter of Col. Nathan Miller, of Warren. In September, 1771, he was baptized by his classmate, Mr. Thompson, and received as a member of the church. He was then engaged in teaching, an employment for which his talents and inclinations especially qualified him. He removed to Wrentham, Massachusetts, where he opened an academy, which soon attained to high distinction among the literary institutions of that day. Among the eighty youth, and upwards, whom he fitted for his Alma Mater, may be mentioned Dr. Maxey, the successor of Manning, Gov. D. R. Williams, of South Carolina, and the celebrated orator and statesman, Hon. Tristram Burges. He also conducted the theological studies of young men, with a view to their entering the Christian ministry. A pupil of this class was the lamented Rev. William Gammell, of Newport, father of Professor William Gammell of the University. In 1776, the day before the Declaration of Independence, Mr. Williams was publicly ordained as pastor of the Baptist Church in Wrentham, an office which he held with usefulness and honor forty-eight years. Quite a number of his early manuscript sermons are among the archives of the College Library. They are written in a plain, legible hand, and exhibit marks of careful preparation. He received the honorary degree of Doctor of Divinity from the University, and in 1789 he was elected a member of the Board of Fellows. When the college was disbanded during the war, and the building was occupied by troops, the little Library, of which he had the charge while a student at Warren,<sup>1</sup> was removed to his home, and once more entrusted to his care and keeping.

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(1) The original pine table which Mr. Williams used in his study chamber at Warren, is preserved in the new Library Building, as an interesting relic of "ye olden time." In its capacious drawer were contained all the books that constituted at that early period the "college library."

The curious may be interested in seeing Mr. Williams' "parchment," or diploma, which I hold in my hand. It bears date September 7, 1769, and contains the signatures of Jacobus Manning, Praeses; David Hoell, Phil. Professor; and Thomas Eyres, Secretary; a mingling of Latin and English not altogether classic, at least. The seal of the college, which it will be observed is affixed to the parchment by a ribbon, has in the centre the busts of George III. and his Queen. It was devised and prepared, as appears from the records, by the Rev. Dr. Stillman, a member of the Board of Fellows.<sup>1</sup>

Thus much for an introduction, which I fear has been in violation of one of the first rules laid down by my respected teacher in Rhetoric, not to make the portico too large for the house. Allow me to devote the remainder of the hour to the Discussion itself, which I have carefully copied from the original documents. It is interesting, not only as a genuine specimen of the earliest public exercises of the college, but also as an illustration, to a certain extent, of the two classes of opinions that then prevailed in regard to American Independence. While the *popular movement* was from the beginning opposed to the King, a good proportion of the professional and editorial intelligence and talent of the thirteen colonies was arrayed against it. In Sabine's History of the American Loyalists, or, as Washington termed them, Tories, may be found notices of one hundred and fifty persons, who were educated at Harvard College, or some other American or foreign institution of learn-

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(1) At the second annual meeting of the corporation, held in Newport on the first Wednesday in September, 1765, "A Seal for the College," so reads the record. "was ordered to be procured immediately, by the Rev. Saml. Stillman, with this device:—Busts of the King and Queen in profile, face to face. Underneath Geo. III., Charlotte. Round the border. The seal of the College in the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations in America." At the next meeting in 1766, it was "Ordered, that the account of the Rev. Saml. Stillman be allowed, and that ten pounds thirteen shillings the amount thereof, be paid him by the Treasurer of the Corporation." Whether this was sterling, or New England currency, it was a large amount of money for the times.

ing. Upwards of eleven hundred Loyalists retired in a body with the royal army, at the evacuation of Boston in 1776. Among these were many persons of distinguished rank and consideration. Of members of the council, commissioners, officers of the customs, and other officials, there were one hundred and two; of clergymen, eighteen; of inhabitants of the neighboring towns and villages, one hundred and five; of merchants and wealthy men who resided in Boston, two hundred and thirteen. New York was especially a disloyal state. Documents, says Sabine, are extant to show, that in 1776, no less than twelve hundred and ninety-three persons acknowledged allegiance to, and professed themselves to be dutiful and well affected subjects of the King, in the single county of Queens.<sup>1</sup> So of Virginia, and other colonies in the beginning: On the other hand the people, so to speak, the laboring classes, the yeomanry of the land, were generally opposed to taxation, and prepared, like Patrick Henry, to resist encroachments upon their rights and privileges. The Baptists, of whom the "Opponent" in this Discussion was one, were, it is well known, as a denomination, almost a unit in favoring Independence, and in fighting or otherwise for their liberties. Among the thirty-two hundred biographies in the work to which I have already referred, only one Baptist, says Dr. Cathcart, can be found, and he was a clergyman, from Wales, who came to this country in the year 1761, and settled in Philadelphia. (Rev. Morgan Edwards.)

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(1) At the evacuation of the City of New York in November, 1783, upwards of 30,000 loyalists, it is said, left with the British army.

EXERCISES OF THE FIRST CLASS OF RHODE ISLAND COLLEGE, PERFORMED AT WARREN, SEPTEMBER 7, 1769.

DISPUTATIO FORENSICA.

JAMES MITCHEL VARNUM,  
*Respondent.*

WILLIAM WILLIAMS,  
*Opponent.*

“WHETHER BRITISH AMERICA CAN UNDER HER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES CONSISTENT WITH GOOD POLICY, AFFECT TO BECOME AN INDEPENDENT STATE.”

RESPONDENT.

True patriotism is undoubtedly one of the noblest virtues that ever inspired the human breast. There is something so grand in its nature, so beneficial in its effects, that even the most despotic themselves are obliged to admire, though with horror and reluctance. It fires the mind with an unshaken resolution, to promote the supreme good of society, notwithstanding private interest may be sacrificed in the effort. It is far from being the sudden blaze of an intemperate zeal, neither is it the enthusiastic flight of political craft, but that uniform deliberative principle, which excites us maturely to survey all the circumstances of our country ;—to consider which of them is or probably may be an obstruction to its growth or future prosperity ;—to examine thoroughly the source from whence this calamity results ; and to persevere with unremitted activity and prudence, in the use of those means which will ensure success, both in disappointing the mischievous designs of its enemies, and in the security of its peace and tranquility upon a basis the most permanent and immovable. In short, the true patriot is warmed with every social virtue.

Such of late has been the situation of our own native land, that ample scope has been afforded for the exercise of this principle ; and to the immortal honor of North America, it has been exerted in a most glorious manner. But as the powerful influences of the solar rays are often diminished and greatly obstructed by aqueous particles in our atmosphere, so our rational remonstrances and powerful rhetoric, have been by the baleful influence of state ministers, counteracted and hitherto rendered abortive. But what may be our approaching destiny cannot be determined by human wisdom. However, as a fixed doom is the only just foundation of despair, we can in no wise consider our case as desperate ; nay, we have the highest reason to expect redress, while we demonstrate by our conduct the most sacred regard for our privileges and firm attachment to our duty. Suffer me therefore, my benevolent auditors, to court your indulgence and candor, while I freely inquire, whether British America can, under her present circumstances, consistent with good policy, effect to become an independent state. An inquiry of so much importance as this, needs no apology for its introduction, especially as our own private interests, the good of our country, and the fate of posterity, are all comprised in it.

Had British America been left to the peaceful enjoyment of those privileges, which it could boast of in former reigns, the most romantic genius, in its wildest excursions, had not dreamt of independence. But the late alarming attacks of the parent state upon American freedom, by thrusting in that triple-headed *Corberus* of a Stamp Act, suspension of legislation in the provinces, and the imposition of duties on paper, glass, etc., has, with justice, roused the advocates of American liberty to the most vigorous exertions in defence of our rights ; amongst whom, not a few will transmit their names, with growing honor, down the long tract of future time to latest posterity, every generation rising up and calling them blessed. But some less cautious and too soon discouraged, have rashly recommended an opposition, *vi et armis*, and an affectation of independence in

the colonies—a thought so shocking, that I tremble in relating it! A design, the prosecution of which, I think myself able to demonstrate, at once would be the most preposterous policy, and productive of the most injurious consequences.

With regard to this imposition of duties, it must be esteemed as taxation without our consent, and consequently a burden; very unnatural treatment from a parent, whom we exerted our utmost efforts to honor and obey! But let us inquire whether there is so much horror in this circumstance, as people are apt to imagine! All manner of taxation, say they, without our consent by ourselves or representatives, is an essential violation of the British Constitution, and therefore inconsistent with our rights as freemen. I fully grant it, and cordially wish that every American was sufficiently impressed with a just sense of it. But we are taxed without our consent, and consequently we are abject slaves to all intents and purposes. Wherefore, rouse! Resist! Conquer!

But stop, and for a moment pause. We are not slaves. In order to this, they must not only impose duties on a number of articles, but oblige us to purchase those articles. This they have not done, neither can they. It is true we are prohibited from purchasing them of other nations, but that by no means amounts to an absolute obligation to receive them from Britain. For there is not a single article restricted in this sort, but what we can manufacture in our own country, or do as well without. We have without dispute, a large quantity of raw materials, and can produce more. And as to our skill and manufacture, it is far from being contemptible, considering the short time of our application thereto. But from the late progress in different branches we may rationally expect improvements, which in the course of a few years will do honor to America. What then is the intolerable burden under which we labor? Truly we are obliged to prosecute industry and frugality. This is a burden indeed, but only to the indolent and lazy patricide. Every skillful politician esteems industry the glory of his country. How can this be applied to better advan-



tage, under our present situation, than to the manufacturing of those articles, which have for the most part, through bad policy, been imported from Europe? This would secure among ourselves an immense quantity of cash, which otherwise must cross the Atlantic, and more effectually enable Great Britain to prosecute those oppressive measures, which deservedly merit our utmost detestation. This would secure the balance of trade in our favor; a consideration essentially necessary to the growth and prosperity of America, and consequently it must be the grand object in the view of every one who is a friend to his country. From all which we may infer, that under the auspicious smiles of heaven, America will soon shine with redoubled splendor.

But some will probably object, that the author of this innovation, intended it as a precedent on which to establish further encroachments; for if Great Britain has a right to impose a penny, she has a pound, and so on as much as she pleases; therefore if we only submit to the first, we virtually give up all right to freedom. I answer, in the present inquiry, we are not concerned about futurity, or what may or may not be good policy *hereafter*, but whether in our *present circumstances*, to affect independence is consistent with good policy? Should it ever be our unhappy case, that we can no longer command our own property, but have it at the sole disposal of despotic rulers, then it will be time to resist, and for this reason, that death itself is the last refuge from abject slavery.

We have yet other sources to which we may resort for redress. We are indisputably favored with an excellent Prince, who, ever since his accession to the throne, has discovered the most tender regard for his numerous subjects. We have learned and powerful advocates in both Houses of Parliament, the thunder of whose eloquence has often stunned and silenced those venal sons of slavery, who pay their homage at ministerial shrines, and venerate no other God but gain. It is also equally certain that the popular clamor at home is in our favor, and the influence of the merchants is engaged in our cause. These are

all favorable circumstances, and well deserve our serious consideration. For the very existence of the legislative authority of the British constitution, depends on the consent of the people. And when the majority of them is set in opposition to any act or law, it must of consequence fall to the ground ; since the legislators act only by a delegated power, which also they derive from the people. We have therefore no reason at present to expect any further infringements, but a speedy deliverance from those of which we now complain. Doubtless we should long since have obtained redress, had we not been tormented by worms in our own bowels. We are misrepresented to our Sovereign, and that too, by those very persons who are dependent on us for their very subsistence. We have also enemies in England, the worst of enemies, who make use of every possible opportunity to fill the Royal ear with suggestions of our disloyalty to his person and government. These obstacles may, and probably soon *will* be, removed out of the way ; and then our mother country will return to her native smiles, and we to an entire confidence in her affection. I shall dismiss these considerations by repeating a few lines from the justly renowned author<sup>1</sup> of "The Farmer's Letters."

"Let us withhold from Great Britain," he says, "all the advantages she has been used to receive from us. Then let us try if our ingenuity, industry, and frugality will not give weight to our remonstrances."

"Let us all be united with one spirit in one cause. Let us invent ; Let us work ; Let us save ; Let us at the same time keep up our claims, and unceasingly repeat our complaints."

But supposing we could resist Great Britain with success, exclusive of foreign assistance, let us forestall some of the inevitable consequences ; and this we may easily do without the

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(1) John Dickinson, of Pennsylvania. He began to publish his celebrated "Letters" in November, 1767. By his numerous writings he upheld the liberties of his country, and contributed very much toward the American Revolution. He was a member of the first Congress of 1774, and a member in subsequent years. He died February 15, 1808, aged 75. His political writings were collected and published several years before his death, in two volumes octavo.

spirit of prophecy. And here it will be allowed by all, that a single discharge from a British navy, would utterly demolish the strongest fortifications of which we can boast, and with infinite ease lay in ashes our principal trading towns. Consequently we must take refuge in the wilderness amongst the savage haunts of wild beasts, fabricate houses in the mountains, claim kindred with and court the society of the merciless savages of the desert. Who sees not, that in such a situation we should not only relinquish the superfluities, but bid an eternal farewell to the pleasures and comforts of life; forget the little politeness and humanity of which we now boast; and relapse into downright barbarity! We must depend entirely on the cultivation of land for subsistence! A precarious subsistence, attended with insuperable difficulties and labors! To which we must add the maintenance of a large standing army, in order to defend our habitations from the ravages of the enemy. But where are our finances? How could we support it? The half, at least, of our able hands, being detained in this manner from tillage, our soil would not produce, even a competency for the necessities of nature; consequently we must either submit to the rage of an incensed foe, or become an easy pray to famine and poverty. Dreadful alternative! Either of which, only in idea, harrows up my very soul.

It will also be confessed, that such have been the circumstances of America from her first settlement to the present time, that there has not been sufficient encouragement or leisure to rear the arts and sciences to that exalted height of which they are capable under the cultivation of those masterly geniuses, brighter than which Greece, Italy or Britain can boast of few. Advantages considered, her literary productions equal, if not rival the best in Europe. We are now arrived to that glorious era, in which science begins to display its charms. Should nothing impede its progress, America will soon shine as a star of the first magnitude in the firmament of literature. But such an animating prospect vanishes, when we are involved in the din of war, and affrighted by the groans of slaughter. What

can we expect but ignorance, superstition and barbarity? What must become of the administration of justice, the only support of a regular society? Under the restraint of what laws should we be laid, but the wild propensions of our own breasts? Instead of civility and politeness, what could we expect but a rude set of barbarians, accosting and accosted in the same frightful unpolished strain? Every man's strength must be his own defence, and when that fails, malice and rage will devour the miserable victims. These are consequences naturally resulting, even upon a presumption that we could resist our mother country with success. But this supposition is wild and chimerical, and by no means to be admitted.

From England we have received our existence, and to her are we indebted for protection. Were it not for her fostering wings, how easily should we be destroyed by an invading foe! We are not yet arrived to maturity. We are infants and stand in the greatest necessity of dandling on the knees of an indulgent parent. How could we confront with Gallic rage, Spanish cruelty, Italic inquisition? But what is most astonishing, and big with horror, we talk of resisting Great Britain! A thought the most ridiculous that ever entered the mind of mortals. One paw of the British Parliament, as says my Lord Chatham, would crush America to atoms. Where are our fortifications? Where is our navy? Where are our regular disciplined troops? Where is our wealth to support a standing army? In short, have we one implement of war? O America! couldst thou hear the roaring thunder of that nation which made Europe tremble and recoil for anguish, the most inconsiderable nation of which as far exceeds thee in strength, as yon glorious luminary does the least satellite of Jupiter in splendor—Couldst thou see the red lightnings flash and the awful conflagration, where then would be thy thoughts of independence? Return, oh return, to thy senses and to thy manufactures! Shouldst thou lift a rebellious hand, blood would run down thy streets as a stream, and death in every dreary form, would stalk through the land. Who can bear the prospect? Who can

behold the dying pangs of America? Stabbed in every vein, wrenched with inexpressible torture, sinking into oblivion.

#### OPPONENT.

To appear an advocate for injured truth, to assert and vindicate the rights of mankind, when trampled on and violated in the most audacious and wicked manner, by men destitute of the common feelings of humanity, is an engagement worthy the gentleman, the scholar, and the Christian. Actuated, I trust, by this generous, disinterested principle, I solicit your attention and candor for a few moments, while I assert and by cogent arguments demonstrate "That British America under her present circumstances *can* consistent with good policy affect to become an independent state."

I am not insensible, gentlemen, of the disadvantage under which I labor, in the present controversy, notwithstanding the goodness of my cause, for it is no secret to the wise observers of human nature, that men in their present state, however upright in their intentions, are subject to strange prepossessions, so that when one side of a question is presented to their view, and supported by the appearance of argument, they yield their assent without due examination of the contrary opinion. It is this precipitancy in the forming of judgments, that has enslaved the world with error, and dragged on the generality of mankind from age to age in ignorance;—for when the mind is settled in an opinion, however ill grounded, it is no easy matter to relinquish it, and that because it carries in it an impeachment of the understanding, at which the mind of man greatly revolts.

From the constitution of human nature you see the great advantage of which my antagonist has availed himself, by being put first in the cause; neither should I think any strange thing had happened, if I should have none but the philosophic and more sensible part of my audience in favor of my opinion; and these without vanity I confide, will keep me in countenance,



while I unravel and show the absurdity of his sophistical reasoning.

Therefore I proceed to an examination of his thesis—and I am willing my reasonings should be tried by the rules of sound argumentation. Attending to his introduction, I was greatly pleased at the many pretty things said in the praise of patriotism, a virtue which can never be too much celebrated, or too heartily recommended, and which is deservedly deemed the bulwark of society. However, I could not but be surprised to find him prefacing a discourse of that kind, with a labored panegyric on a virtue, which his whole chain of reasoning tended totally to eradicate, and which forced upon me the droll conceit of a celebrated ancient, in the introduction to his “*Art of Poetry*,” “of joining a mare’s neck to a human head.” Upon his principles, one would have expected him rather to have displayed his rhetoric in preaching up the salutary doctrine of non-resistance, and positive obedience, and to have endeavored to persuade us that the Americans were like other beasts of burden, formed for the use of, and obliged to be obsequious to, their European masters. But this introduction he intended as a lure, effectually to captivate the audience, that they might readily swallow the gilded pills which he had prepared for them afterwards. In short, he seems to have studied Granvillian politics, and adopted the maxims in present vogue with British ministers. This surely will not be deemed speaking reproachfully of his education. However this artifice is quite transparent, and can answer no valuable purpose in gaining his point with you, gentlemen, who weigh arguments, and can be satisfied with nothing short of evidence.

I may therefore proceed next to the stating of the question, with which I have as little cause to be displeased, upon the whole, as with his introduction. He has indeed said the reverse of what I am about to prove, and together with it many agreeable things in a very agreeable manner; but as little to his purpose, as his eccomiums on patriotism. He tells us that the late taxations first suggested the thought of independence to the Ameri-



cans. That the Americans have in a glorious manner defended their rights, purchased immortality, etc., etc., all which I consider as making nothing to his purpose, but weakening in fact what he had before asserted. But if he has produced anything that may merit the appellation of arguments in this case, I imagine it must be the following:—"That a fixed doom is the only just foundation of despair, and that this is not the case with America."—"That an inviolable attachment to our duty, and incessant remonstrances to the throne, will give us redress from all our present grievances."—"That we can cease to use British manufactures, and compel Britain to a compliance."—"That we reap great advantages from her, and are indebted to her for protection."—"That it would be our ruin, if it was in our power, to break her connections." And lastly: "That an attempt to resist her would be to the last degree chimerical and frantic, and in which we cannot possibly succeed." These I think contain everything in the performance that can be imagined argumentative.

As to the first, "That a fixed doom is the only just foundation of despair, and that this is not yet our case." I would beg leave to ask the gentleman what ideas he has connected with the words "fixed doom?" The British Parliament have more than once asserted in the strongest terms, their jurisdiction over the colonies in the affair of taxation: and have given us the most convincing proofs that they were in earnest, by enacting those execrable laws relative to stamps, paper, glass, etc. The ministry have put these laws into execution, in their utmost rigor, when it was in their power. They have sent ships of war, and no inconsiderable armament, to enforce obedience, which have disturbed our peaceful trade, almost beggared the greater part of our merchants, drained our country of cash, and subjected this vast continent to the cruel illiberal insults of a few imperious crown officers whose tender mercies are cruelty. The king has approved the conduct of his Parliament and ministry, and thanked them publicly for their signal services; and all this with our most dutiful remonstrances and prayers in his

ear. Nay, the last intelligence from England to be relied on, informs us that the Parliament will never give up their rights of taxation, that is, their right of enslaving their fellow subjects in America. And yet our "doom is not fixed!" But if it *is* not, we need never for the future dread slavery or tyranny, from any quarter. But he says, "We must *remonstrate*, and incessantly *petition the throne* for redress." What in this respect could have been done that we have left undone? Our prayers have not only been repeated, but have breathed the spirit of loyalty and affection to his Majesty and government. They have been the united voice of millions of distressed, injured, innocent people. But what have they availed us? Nay, have we not been severely punished for praying? And that too, when our prayers have not only been materially but formally good. After all this, what has reason to hope for, from this quarter? Nothing. Surely we are hopeless, degenerate slaves. And nothing remains but that we avail ourselves of those advantages with which nature has furnished us, and boldly vindicate our liberty, or lose our lives in the glorious cause. But he has hinted at a method of compelling Great Britain into an compliance, by stopping all importation, and living as much as possible independent of them. So after all his noise and parade, we are happily agreed, and are pleading for precisely the same thing; for I have not intimated, nor indeed conceived, the least desire of shedding their blood, or of hazarding the shedding of ours. Far be it from me, or any of the advocates of my cause, to desire this of even the first cruel projectors, or the malicious executors, of those infernal plans. We choose to leave them to meet their deserts at the hand of Him who hears, and who will redress the groans of the oppressed.

The next thing he has urged has the greatest appearance of argument of anything hitherto mentioned, and is, "That we are indebted to her for protection: that we have received innumerable favors from her, and cannot possibly subsist without her." If all this was *fact*, I should think it worthy a serious consideration; but I imagine it is much easier to assert

than to prove. What child in New England does not know, that about a century and a half ago, our venerable ancestors, persecuted for religion in their native land, fled for refuge to the more hospitable wilds of America; and unassisted, unsupported by Britain, felt by turns the extremities of hunger, cold, and Indian barbarity, until by their valor, and the kind interposition of heaven, they settled themselves in a peaceful habitation in this new found world. An inheritance which they bequeathed to their posterity, they to us, and we shall again transmit to ours, if we are but followers of them, who are translated to a better country. How little protection Old England afforded to, and with what almost entire neglect she treated those infant plantations, the annals of New England sufficiently prove; until she found that by affording us protection, she could be amply repaid. This she rationally expected, and has long since found verified, by the amazing increase of her trade. It may without an hyperbole be asserted, that it is in a great measure owing to America, that the British navy rides mistress of the main, which, before the plantation of these colonies was not only inconsiderable, but despicable in the eyes of Europe. And had they failed here, the prospect of having millions of faithful slaves in America to fill their coffers with treasure, might justly be esteemed an ample compensation for their assistance. And this from her late conduct, if Britons are uniform, seems to have been in her view.

That we are absolutely dependent on England for existence has never yet been sufficiently proved to me; for if a few thousands, who first planted this country, under the care and protection of heaven, could sustain all the fierce attacks of unnumbered tribes of barbarians, instigated and aided by the power of France, what may not the vastly augmented numbers of its present inhabitants be supposed able to achieve? As to any injury which our trade could receive by this measure, it would be impossible, we need not fear being worsted. Should Britain shut her ports against us, it does not follow that Holland, France, Spain and Portugal would. On the contrary,

they would welcome us as their customers, and allow us to make the advantages of our markets, of which we are now totally deprived. And who would not rather feed at a stranger's than a mother's table, provided they could find better fare and kinder treatment?

Now the last of all, the most formidable argument, comes thundering in with the roar of cannon, cries of slaughter, and all the dire images that a poetic imagination can portray. But however noisy and terrific, I will venture near and give it a candid examination. It is this:—If independent of foreign aid, we could resist Great Britain with success, this our success would prove our certain ruin; our trading towns would be laid in ashes by one volley from a British squadron; we should be utterly impoverished by maintaining a large standing army; our hands would be taken from the tillage of land; and we should be driven back into the wilderness to seek shelter, obliged to relinquish all literary pursuits, with many more conceits too chimerical to mention. What I have already said, sufficiently confutes the most forcible part of this argument. None, however, will deny, but that our seaport towns may with ease be reduced by the British navy; and let them be destroyed if they can find their account in it. Nay, I could with pleasure behold the scene, rather than see them stand as the dear purchase of American freedom. As to a standing army, all America would compose it. Like the first founders of Rome, we should all be soldiers, and if this would not suffice to guard us against our foes, the sons of liberty from Britain's isle, nay Corsica's would come in rafts across the wide Atlantic to our aid; for thousands there are now convinced that America is the only spot on this globe that can with propriety be called free.

The objection against the tillage of the earth for subsistence seems to militate directly against the wisdom of the Creator, who planted a garden for innocent man, ordered him to dress it, and subsist on the fruits thereof. And wise and virtu-

ous men in all ages, have been lavish in their praises of this kind of life; and that with reason, for its simplicity, and freedom from temptations to vice. Amidst his vagaries and zeal for tyranny he would feign persuade us that it is the proper nursing of literature, the very reverse of which is abundantly evident from reason and fact.

Thus have I followed my antagonist through his labored performance, weighed it in the balance, and found it wanting. And now, my countrymen, let me, as a friend to American Liberty, stand forth and exhort you to be fast and immovable in defence of your rights. Let not the menaces of a British Parliament, in the least affright, nor their fair promises deceive you, into any base compliances. *Latet anguis in herba*. Their evident design is to make us slaves. They are wresting our money from us without our consent. Do not be charmed by the fascinating sounds, Parent-State, Mother-Country, Indulgent-Parent, etc. You are convinced that these are mere words, of course, without ideas, and might as well be adopted by Normandy, Saxony, Denmark, and Sweden, as by Britain, when they are used to reconcile us to slavery, for none will deny that we derive our pedigree from them.

Their menaces might terrify and subjugate servile, timid Asiatics, who peaceably prostrate their necks to be trampled on by every bold usurper. But my auditors, you have not so learned the principles of liberty. You know liberty is our birth-right, and if this is taken away, we may in part adopt the language of Micah, "What have we more?" Besides, how unreasonable is it, that this wide extended continent, formed by nature for a kingdom of its own, should pay homage to the diminutive island of Britain, but a mere speck upon this huge globe? I have, as before observed, no aversion to a friendly alliance, a close union with Britain, provided we could enjoy that liberty wherewith God has made us free. But to purchase their friendship at so dear a rate as owning them our master, is worse than madness; it is patricide. How could we answer it to the manes of our ancestors, should those venerable



shades meet, accost, and call us to an account for such conduct? How can we answer it to posterity, who must drag out a painful life in slavery? Nay, how shall we answer it to ourselves, when the galling yoke of slavery bears heavy on our necks?

On the other hand, view the liberty, the transporting liberty of America. View millions basking in its beams, and gratefully acknowledging their obligations to the venerable names that now stand as pillars to support our rights. View America, the largest and happiest empire on earth, the land of liberty, the seat of science, the refuge of religion. But my point is gained; your countenances indicate the patriotic feelings of your breasts, and with one voice you declare that **AMERICA SHALL BE FREE.**

#### RESPONDENT.

Liberty, Sirs, is the fair offspring of heaven, the inestimable property of man. And that inconsiderate wretch who can calmly resign it to a tyrant's lust, must be lost to the genuine feelings of humanity, and deserves to be stained with the blackest infamy. For tyranny is naturally brutal, untamed by reason, unawed by religion. It proceeds from the foul embraces of pride and cruelty, and from them received its commission to spread devastation and havoc wherever human nature can be found. I see the infernal monster skulking at a distance; but with horror let me say it, under the specious garb of liberty, cloaking its execrable designs with the soothing epithets of good policy. For in that fatal hour when North America affects independence, she will inevitably involve herself in the worst of slavery. This is not the wild conjecture of a distempered brain, not the brat of cowardice, but the result of mature deliberation. And notwithstanding the many objections advanced by my antagonist, to my former cogent arguments, I am still convinced that good policy is consistent with itself, and loudly proclaims the absolute necessity of an indissoluble union between Great Britain and the colonies. Let us then, for a moment, suppress



the premature affectation of independence, whilst we examine a little farther the chimerical basis on which it is founded.

As to our "doom being fixed," it is impossible for the British Parliament to make us "hopeless, desperate slaves," by imposing duties on a number of their own articles, which we are under no absolute obligation to purchase;—for, as I before observed, we can either manufacture these restricted articles in our own country, or dispense with the use of them. This argument, however, my opponent has not attempted to answer, for it is indeed impossible. Therefore what has been observed with regard to America's doom, and the determinations of the Parliament is nothing at all to the purpose. But supposing they were determined to enslave us, shall we precipitate ourselves into certain destruction in order to avoid an imaginary inconvenience? This is madness. It is worse—it is suicide!

But we are informed by my antagonist, that he has no desire of shedding European blood, or of hazarding the shedding of ours. And truly we believe him. However, this is giving up the question to all intents and purposes. And indeed he expressly asserts "that after all his noise and parade, he and I are pleading for precisely the same thing." Now in the name of wonder, why has he rallied all his artillery to confound me, if possible, for embracing his sentiments? I should imagine that persons "actuated by such generous, disinterested principles," as he tells us he is, would be fond of others vindicating the truth as well as themselves. But anon we hear him talking in quite a different strain, breathing the spirit of ingratitude, declaring that we have received scarce any advantage from Great Britain;—which is egregiously repugnant to known facts, and those, too, the most incontestable.

Let us view North America from her first settlement down to the present time, and we shall find Great Britain continually affording her assistance. Permitted and encouraged by her it was planted by her own sons. Guarded by her powerful arms France has endeavored in vain to encroach upon her property and freedom. Had we been totally neglected, as this gentle-

man would insinuate, by the British court, what must have been our melancholy fate, when exposed, weak and defenceless in ourselves, to the inveterate rage of our malignant foes? Is it not conspicuous to all, that the dim traces of our existence would have proclaimed our wretchedness? Besides we have not only been defended against the attempts of our enemy to deprive us of our habitation, but enabled, by the commanding awe of British protection, to maintain a valuable and extensive commerce. How inconsistent, therefore, is my antagonist to assert, that our "trade would receive no possible detriment," while he fully acknowledges that our principal trading towns would be utterly laid to the ground, at sight of a British squadron. If our seaports were wrested from us, what method could be devised for the continuation of commerce? Oh! says this patron of liberty, "the ports of Holland, France, Spain and Portugal would be open to our reception." Yes, but where shall we find harbors of egress and ingress? Why truly we must betake ourselves to aerial navigation, build ships specifically lighter than the atmosphere, and soar above the reach of British cannon. A fine conceit indeed; for which one might rationally imagine he was indebted to the occult science of witchcraft.

"Thunder, lightning, conflagration and dire alarms" start up in view and fill my opponent with terror. I protest by those British heroes, those invincible warriors, who have so often drawn their swords in defence of justice, that he is not affrighted without a cause. After all his incentives to rebellion, he has come at length to this conclusion, that all North America must compose a standing army, men, women, and children, without exception; and upon his own principles, cut off from commerce "we must depend entirely on the cultivation of land for subsistence," and that too, without hands to till it.

Having therefore, my indulgent auditors, examined the principal objections exhibited against my former arguments, and found nothing in them of real weight, what remains but that I entreat you to strain every nerve to perpetuate that union, which

is not only the cement of interest, and a never failing source of commerce between Great Britain and her dependencies, but the very bulwark of the protestant religion. A union on which depends the fate of millions. Of millions did I say? The fate of Europe depends upon it. I beseech you, my dear countrymen, I conjure you, as you regard your own private interest, as you value the prosperity of your country, as you esteem the happiness of posterity as you prize the blessings of liberty, as you are concerned for the cause of religion and the cause of God, banish the fatal thought of affecting to become an independent state! Adopt and prosecute such measures, and in such manner, that it will be impossible to determine whether an American's character is most distinguishable for loyalty to his sovereign, duty to his mother country, love of freedom, or affection for his native soil.

THE BRITISH FLEET IN RHODE ISLAND.

BY GEORGE C. MASON.



## THE BRITISH FLEET IN RHODE ISLAND.

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But little information has been gathered in regard to the vessels of "His Majesty's Navy," that were stationed in the waters of Rhode Island during the years preceding the Revolution. The names of some of the vessels are known to us, and we have a general knowledge of the high-handed acts of their commanders—of the cutter *St. John*, the ship *Maidstone*, the schooner *Gaspee*, and the sloop *Liberty*; and, later, of the exacting demands of *Wallace*, of the *Rose*, and *Ayscough*, of the *Swan*; but there is yet much to be learned in relation to these and other vessels that were stationed here—their size, their armament, the number of men they carried, and the manner in which they were victualed. For years the people bore with them, but there came a time when the feelings of the inhabitants were so embittered, by frequent acts of injustice and high handed measures, that they utterly refused to provide anything further for their sustenance, and it was not till they themselves were nearly reduced to the point of starvation, and were threatened by the guns of the enemy, that they were willing to listen to a compromise. In 1775 no vessel could enter Narragansett Bay without being robbed of her stores and cargo; and every farm on the sea-board was stripped of its flocks and herds, by the boats that scoured the shores for this purpose.<sup>1</sup> It was,

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(1)The following extracts, from two letters, written by William Vernon, illustrate the text. William Vernon was, in 1777, elected by Congress a member of the Eastern Navy Board, established at Boston, and was its presiding officer, from its organization to its dissolution.

NEWPORT, Aug't 23, 1775.

GEORGE HALEY, ESQ., LONDON. SIR: \* \* \* \* \* The *Venus*, *Othello* and *Hampden* are all safely arrived at Montego Bay, Jamaica. The oppression of the British Parliament, or rather of the Ministry is felt in every port of America, truly felt in North America, by some Individ-



therefore, an act of necessity, one of self preservation, that led the inhabitants, at that time, to furnish such articles as they had previously supplied, and for which there was a constant demand. To save the town from bombardment, permission was granted by the General Assembly to the inhabitants of Newport, to feed the enemy; they appointing some one person for this purpose, and the ships agreeing, in turn, to permit the coasting vessels, engaged in bringing in provisions, to come and go without interruption.

It was an unusual thing to see a vessel of war, other than a privateer, in the waters of Rhode Island prior to 1764 and 1765. At that time the growing discontent was becoming more and more marked, owing to the determined efforts of the Crown to enforce the stamp act; and to support the officers of the customs, in their effort to collect the revenue, a number of vessels, under Lord Colville, Rear Admiral of the white, &c., were sent here. These were the ships Squirrel and Maidstone, and the

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uals sensibly so, indeed Tools of Government, of the Navy, especially, I am sorry to say, many of them are most glaringly partial in doing what they are pleased to call Duty; by taking possession of those persons' Vessels with whom they are not intimately or somehow connected, other Persons' property they seize and send to Boston coming from any part of the World. Our Brig Royal Charlotte, John Knowles, Master, from Jamaica, loaded with Rum and Sugar, Cap'n Wallace, of his Majesty's Ship Rose, on the 19<sup>th</sup> June, seized and sent to Boston, notwithstanding the condition of the Port Bill, and of any Ports being free and open, is that they continued their Trade to Great Britain and the British Islands in the West Indies, yet we say in direct violation of the Act, he sent our Vessel and Cargo to Boston, where she now remains in possession of Admiral Greaves, Illegally held, to our prejudice, upwards of £2000 sterling. Whereas between the 19<sup>th</sup> of June and this Date, the said Wallace hath released and given up above Ten Sail of Vessels from Hispaniola and other Ports, loaded with Molasses, Sugar, Coffee, Wine &c. &c. This partial conduct of Cap'n Wallace we can not account for, certainly we must recover adequate Damages of him, if all Law and Justice is not abrogated with you, for which purpose, we have made a legal protest, and perhaps may be the subject of Litigation in your Courts of Law.

\* \* \* \* \* The Depredations committed by this petty Tyrant upon our Trade and the defenceless Town of Newport is shocking to human Nature, he is a savage beyond belief and description; you know we have

cutter *St. John*. The *Squirrel* was commanded by Captain Richard Smith, the *Maidstone* by Captain Antrobus, and the *St. John* by Captain Hill. The presence of these vessels, under the circumstances, did not tend to conciliate the people, but, on the contrary, they helped to strengthen a feeling of opposition, which was heightened by the injudicious acts of their commanders. It is a matter of history that their officers frequently went beyond the letter of their instructions, and this finally led the exasperated people to measures that were clearly acts of insubordination. The schooner *St. John* had the guns of Fort George turned upon her, the sloop *Liberty* was burnt by an excited crowd of sea-faring men, and a boat of the *Maidstone* was wrested from the crew, and openly burnt in one of the streets of Newport.

From the time that the *Squirrel* was sent here, in the autumn of 1763, up to the opening of the Revolution, there was seldom a day when there was not one or more vessels of

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three other Vessels at Jamaica that it's probable will fall into his hands, as we daily expect them. We do not expect any favour, as we have no connection with Scotch Men, whose influence intirely governs him, and whose principals are notoriously abhorrent to the present Family, at least those who reside with us are peculiarly so. \* \* \* \* \*

Y'r H'ble Serv'ts

S. & W. VERNON.

NEWPORT, February 22, 1776,

MR. JOSIAH HEWES, at Philadelphia,

SIR :

\* \* \* \* \* You will not be surprized, when I tell you, that last Sunday, Wallace, the Infernal Pirate, sent the Bomb Brig'te and Three Arm'd Cutters into the Harbour, and after stripping the Brig'te *Venus*, which lay aground just within the Lime Rocks, of Sails, Colles, Anchors, Cordage and Yard, Topmasts, in one word everything, and then set Fire to her, which burnt to the water's edge—this was a fine Vessel of about 170 tons—Good God, where is our American Navy?

I am, Dear Sir,

Y'r H'mble Serv't,

WM. VERNON.

war on this station. How these vessels were victualed I have now the means of stating. When ships were sent to America, it was necessary to provide regular supplies of provision for them while on the coast. To this end a contract was made with some party, who was known as the Victualing Agent, and who had his assistants in the Colonies—one (general) in Boston, one in Halifax, one in Newport, and one in Charleston. The victualing agent, at the time of which I am writing, was Sir Alexander Grant, who soon after retired from the office, and the appointment was then given to his son, Robert Grant. There were two contracts, which were renewed from time to time; the one known as the “beef contract,” and the other was for general ship stores; and the better to understand the nature of these obligations, I give copies of two that are in a perfect state of preservation:

“CONTRACTED AND AGREED, this sixth day of July, 1772, with the Commissioners for victualing his Majesty’s navy, for and on the behalf of his Majesty, by me, Robert Grant, of London, merch’t: and I do hereby oblige myself timely and seasonably to furnish all such of his Majesty’s ships and vessels, as shall come to *New England*, and be in want of provisions, with good wholesome sea victuals, fit in all respects for the service of his Majesty’s navy, at and after the following rates and prices sterling, viz.:

“BREAD, at sixteen shillings per hundred weight.

“BEER: at thirty-seven shillings and sixpence per tun of two hundred and sixteen gallons of beer measure: or, if more is demanded, fifteen gallons of rum of merchantable proof are to be furnished in lieu of and the same price as one tun of beer.

“BEEF; at eight pence per piece of four pounds.

“PORK; at six pence per piece of two pounds.

“PEASE; at 3s. per bushel.

“OATMEAL; well and sufficiently bolted at 3s. per bushel.

“BUTTER; at 6½d. per lb.

“CHEESE; Cheshire, Gloucester, or Warwickshire, or cheese of equal goodness, at 4¾d. per pound.

“VINEGAR; at 6d. per Gallon.

“Including new casks of all kinds (except for beer) that may be wanted for packing of said provisions, setting up and trimming of casks, cartage, labor, freight, boat hire, and all other charges whatsoever relating to the victualing, except necessary and extra necessary money to the Pursers, and in case

there shall be a necessity for furnishing any new bisket, bags, iron hoops, or tight butts or puncheons for beer or water to any of his Majesty's ships, I do oblige myself to furnish the same at the rate of 2s. per bag and 55s. per tun for the laid cask, reckoning two butts or three puncheons to a tun, and 2s. for each iron hoop, and I do agree and oblige myself that the said casks shall be made of good, sound, seasoned staves, free from sapp, and of ye following dimensions and gauge, viz : each butt to gauge one hundred and eight gallons, Winchester measure, to be 26 in. broad at the head and the staves 52 in. long and  $1\frac{1}{10}$  in. thick at the chime and  $\frac{7}{10}$ ths thick at the bulge, and that each puncheon be 41 in. long, 25 in. broad at the head and to gauge 72 gal. W. M. and the staves 1 in. thick at the chime and  $\frac{7}{10}$  in. thick at the bulge : and that each cask shall be marked with my name at length, with a burnt mark on the head and on the bulge stave, next the bung, that in case the said cask shall appear not to be answerable to the said conditions, a deduction may be made from my bill on discovery or proof thereof, on the judgment of two able and experienced coopers, of two-thirds the price I am allowed on this contract for the same, which abatement I do hereby consent may be made by the said Commissioners for victualing, or any three or more of them for the time being, or do otherwise agree to pay the am't thereof to the Treasurer of the Navy, if the said Commissioners shall think proper so to direct.

“And whereas no new bags, or casks for beer, or water, are to be furnished but on ye'most urgent occasions, I am therefore, before I supply any, to receive a warrant from the commander of the ship for that purpose, and a certificate from the signing officers (which are the Captain, or, in his necessary absence, the next commissioned officers, Master or Boatswain) that all his Majesty's old casks belonging to said ship have been first trimmed and fitted up, w'ch order, together w'th the Purser's receipt, and a certificate from the signing officers that the bags and casks were actually delivered on board in kind, I am to produce to ye said Commissioners, and also my own, or agent's affidavit that the said bags, water or beer casks so supplied were actually sent on board in kind, and that the casks were not filled with rum when sent off, nor intended or designed to be made use of for rum casks afterwards, to the best of my own or agent's knowledge and belief, and that no money or other consideration was paid or given, or is to be paid or given the Purser, or any person or persons in his behalf, or any other person whatsoever in lieu of all or any part thereof. And I do also oblige myself that the casks in w'ch the rum shall be sent on board his Majesty's ships and vessels, shall be equal in goodness to ye casks made use of in exporting rum for merchandize from New England to Great Britain.

“And I do further oblige myself that no rum or beer shall be supplied on this contract in any other casks than what shall be numbered and have the contents of the gallons in each cask marked on the head thereof, and that the beef shall not be delivered in any other manner than in pieces of 4 pound w’t, nor pork than of two pounds, and that the said beef and pork shall always hold of such weight as that every twenty-eight pieces of beef, cut four pound pieces, taken out of the cask as they rise, and the salt shaken off, shall weigh one hundred pounds, neat avoirdupoise weight, and that every fifty-six pieces of pork cut for two pound pieces and taken out of the cask as they rise and the salt skaken off, as from the beef, shall neat 104 pounds, avoirdupoise w’t, and that there shall not be put in at any time with the flesh any unusual pieces, such as leg bones, shins of oxen, or the cheeks of hogs, or ox hearts &c. And I do oblige myself that the casks containing the flesh shall be full bound and full of pickle.

“And I do further oblige myself and engage that all the provisions that shall be issued on this contract shall be sent on board his Majesty’s ships in kind, and no money paid in lieu thereof, and that they shall be good, sound and sweet and in all other respects fit for his Majesty’s service, and the best of each kind that New England does afford, and that the rum shall be none of it less than six months old at the respective times of supplying the same to his Majesty’s ships, and that said provisions shall all hold good for six months after the delivery on board the respective ships, and in case any part of the said provisions delivered as aforesaid to any of his Majesty’s ships or vessels shall be found defective and be cast by survey within the time of the said six months warranty, I do hereby consent and agree that it shall and may be lawful for the said Commissioners of the Victualing Office, or any three or more of them for the time being, to put a stop or make abatements out of any bill or bills of mine made out for the said provisions and signed or unsigned by said Commissioners for payment, to the full value and at the same price as I am allowed for the same, for indemnifying his Majesty, and in case *any provisions are to be returned to me or my order*, therè shall remain no bill or bills to issue, or that the bill or bills so remaining shall not amount unto a sum sufficient to indemnify his Majesty as aforesaid, then I do hereby oblige myself, my heirs, ex’rs, and admin’s to make good the same to his Majesty : and in case any provisions so cast by survey shall be returned from the ships to any of the agents for victualing his Majesty’s Navy, the said provisions are to be returned to me or my order if I shall think to demand the same or ye product thereof.



“And it is further agreed with said Commissioners that before I furnish any provisions to any of his Majesty’s ships, I am to receive a warrant from the Commander thereof for so doing, and also a certificate from the signing officers of the ship, setting forth the particular occasion for such provision being wanted and the quantity thereof, and upon my producing to said Commissioners the said warrant and certificate, together with the Purser’s receipt and a certificate also from the signing officers, of the quantity and species of Provisions (expressed in words at length) received, and that the same were delivered on board in kind and were good and fit for his Majesty’s service, together with my own or agent’s affidavit, which is to be on the foot or on the back of the receipt signed by the Purser, that the said provisions (mentioning the quantity and quality at full length) were actually delivered on board in kind, as therein expressed, and that I or my agents neither have paid or given, or are to pay or give to the Purser, or any person or persons on his behalf, or to any other person whatsoever, any money or other consideration in lieu of all or any part thereof. I am to have bills made out for the same at the prices before mentioned and numbered in the course of the victualing, to bear interest at 4 per ct. after six months from the date thereof, and I do oblige myself constantly to take three receipts, signed by the Purser, for provisions supplied on this contract, and to send two of them to the said commissioners.

“And I do further oblige myself that on application being made to me or my agents by the Pursers of his Majesty’s ships and vessels, to supply them with necessary money for their bills in ster’g on the said Commissioners, at thirty days after sight. And it is also agreed with the said Commissioners that they will discharge and pay the said bills when due, upon the following certificates from the Captain or commanding officer being transmitted at the foot of each bill, viz: ‘This is to certify the Commissioners for victualing his Majesty’s navy, that . . . months necessary money is due to Mr. . . . Purser of his Majesty’s ship . . . under my command, since his last indenting or being otherwise supplied with necessary money, and that the sum of £ . . . drawn for in this bill does not exceed a proportion of two-thirds for the said time.’ And it is hereby understood and agreed by and with the said Commissioners that the aforesaid bills for necessary money, are to be for the proportion of two-thirds of what was actually due at the time of drawing of said bills, and not for any necessary money that may become due after the respective dates of ye bills.

“And I also engage that my agents for the time being, shall communicate a copy of this contract to the Captains or com-



manding officers, and to the Pursers of such of his Majesty's ships as shall from time to time apply to him, in order to peruse the same.

"And I do oblige myself to deliver weekly to the Admiral or commander in chief of his Majesty's ships in New England, or when the commanding officer for the time shall require it, during the continuance of this contract, an abstract of all the provisions remaining in my stores, and likewise an abstract of the several species and quantities of provisions issued to each of his Majesty's ships every week at New England.

"And it is hereby further agreed that I am to furnish rice in lieu of half the quantity of oatmeal that shall be demanded, after the rate of  $\frac{1}{2}$  pint of rice in lieu of a pint of oatmeal, and the quantity of rice that shall appear by ye vouchers to be supplied to his Majesty's ships shall be paid for in the following manner, that is to say 32lbs of rice shall be allowed to be equal and shall be paid for at the same price as 1 bushel of oatmeal.

"And for the due performance of this contract, I do bind myself in the penalty of £2,000 in case of my failure in any part thereof; and I do oblige myself to procure two able and sufficient persons, such as shall be approved by the said Commissioners, to be bound with me jointly in a bond to his Majesty, of £2,000, for the due and well performance of the said contract, which is to commence the thirtieth day of November next, and continue for twelve months certain, and further until six months warning shall be given on either side of the determination thereof.

"In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal, the day and year first before written.

ROBERT GRANT.

"BEEF CONTRACT. Contracted and agreed this twenty-seventh day of July, 1774, with the Commissioners for victualing his Majesty's navy, for and on behalf of his Majesty, by me, Robert Grant, of London, Merchant, and I do hereby bargain and sell to his Majesty, and oblige myself to deliver, free of all charges and risque, into the boats of his Majesty's ships and vessels at New England, that shall be sent for the same, all such quantities of fresh beef as shall be demanded for the use of his Majesty's ships and vessels at the said port, for one beef-day and one pork-day in each week, during the space of twelve months certain, from the eighteenth day of November next, and further, until six months warning shall be given on either side, at the rate of nineteen shillings and five pence and five-eighths of a penny per hundred weight, and I do agree and oblige myself that all the beef that shall be demanded as aforesaid, shall be delivered within forty-eight hours after each respective demand being made, and that all the beef that shall be delivered on this

contract shall be good, fat, well-fed ox beef, in all respects fit for his Majesty's service. And it is also agreed that before I furnish any fresh beef, to any of his Majesty's ships or vessels, I am to receive a warrant from the commander thereof for so doing, and also a certificate from the signing officers of the ship (which are the Captain, or in his necessary absence the next commissioned officer) Master or Boatswain, of the want thereof; and upon my producing to the said Commissioners the said warrant and certificate, agreeable to the forms annexed, together with the Purser's receipt and a certificate also from the signing officers of the particular quantity of Fresh beef (expressed in words at length) received, and that the same was actually delivered on board in kind, and was good and fit for his Majesty's service, together with my own or my agent's affidavit, which is to be at the foot, or on the back of the receipt, signed by the Purser, that the said fresh beef (mentioning the same and quantity in words at length) was actually delivered into the boats of his Majesty's ships in kind as therein expressed, and that I or my agent neither have paid or given, or are to pay or give the Purser, or any person or persons on his behalf, any money or other consideration in lieu of all or any part thereof, which said receipt from the Purser and a certificate from the signing officers, and affidavit from myself or my agent, are to be rendered according to the forms annexed, I am to be paid for the said fresh beef by bills made out at the price before-mentioned, and numbered in the course of the victualing, to bear interest at four pounds per ct. after six months from the dates thereof: And I do oblige myself constantly to take the receipts signed by the Pursers for fresh beef supplied on this contract, and to send two of them to the said Commissioners.

"And I do oblige myself or my agent for the time being, to communicate a copy of this contract to the Captains or commanding officers, and to the Pursers of such of his Majesty's ships and vessels as shall from time to time apply to me or him, in order to peruse the same.

"And I do bind myself to the exact performance of every part of this contract, in the penalty of five hundred pounds in case of my failure in any part thereof; and I do also oblige myself to procure two able and sufficient persons, such as shall be approved of by the said Commissioners to be bound with me jointly in a bond to his Majesty, of five hundred pounds, for the due and well performance of the said contract. In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal the day and year first above written.

ROBERT GRANT.

In presence of JOHN WATTS,  
ROG'R SOUTHERTON.

It was necessary that the contractor should have his agent in America, who, in turn appointed agents in different seaports. From 1763 to 1773 John Powell, who resided in Boston, was the general agent. January 1, 1773, the resignation of Powell, who was in poor health, was accepted, and Alexander Brymer, of Boston, was appointed in his place. Through Brymer all business of victualing the navy was carried on, from the time of his appointment to the final rupture between the two countries. Alexander Thompson was the agent at Halifax, Shirley and Price for South Carolina, and Christopher Champlin in Newport. In the many letters that passed between the agents, one finds frequent allusion to the troubles that were disturbing the country, and it is pleasant to a Rhode Islander to know that the agent in Newport, while faithful to his duties under the contract of Robert Grant, never allowed his interest to get the better of his patriotism, but uniformly sustained the cause of the country. This is the more marked in that the letters in which these expressions of fidelity are found, were in many instances addressed to Brymer, whose own letters show that he was wedded to the Crown. The latter wrote, under date of December 15, 1773 :

“Although in my opinion the tea will not be sent home, yet as I presume it will be stored till the sense of the Ministry and the East India Company is known, it will in effect amount to the same. Whatever you may learn is done to the southward in respect to it, you may depend, like a dog in a mill, we will follow. Our blasts are too sudden to last any time. Dogs that bark loudest bite seldomest and are the least to be feared.”

March 25, 1774, he writes :

“I am no politician ; I meddle not in public measures : I am neuter. However, I must beg to differ in opinion on the effect of the resolves you may be preparing or have prepared to prevent the sale of tea if government should hereafter enforce the landing of it. If such a resolution should be adopted, which I by no means think likely under present circumstances, it would be to carry it with a high hand. Much is to be said on both sides. But why prevent the landing of it? If people think as they speak the tea would rot in store, not a pound would be sold, and would not this deter the sending any more

more effectually than any resolutions the people could enter into?"

Again he writes :

"It is needless to say that the teas lately arrived, 28½ chests, are destroyed, as you will have already heard. This is liberty indeed, big with the fate of every one's fortune, entirely at the disposal of the good people. Forbearance at a certain pitch ceases to be a virtue, so liberty, when strained, is downright licentiousness. What a man wills and cannot, and is obliged to do what he wills not, where is liberty? Where is the parallel? Behold it! View the times dispassionately and it is to be found easily. We may well say with Caesar, *the Rubicon is past. Farewell Peace!*"

The Newport agent wrote, as early as November 3, '69 :

• "The grand attack of Britian on American liberty, by attempting to dragoon them into unconstitutional revenue laws has produced a general union of the colonies to fall on salutary measures to obtain relief. Among others, the non importation of British manufactures is acceded to by the merchants till some relief is given us by Parliament."

December 31, 1773, in reply to remarks on the importation of tea, he writes :

"This intended monopoly, which would operate much against the merchants in London, and finally ruin the most of them in America in course of a few years, has fixed the minds of the trading part of the community, and should Government use any coercive measures to affect the landing any for the future, the asylum then remains with the people. They will enter into an association not to buy nor sell or consume any, and will break off all connection with any who attempt to deal in it. This I think can be read in the countenance of every one among us."

Of the vessels of war sent to Rhode Island and which are mentioned in the victualing papers, the earlist are the Squirrel, a ship commanded by Captain Richard Smith, the cutter St. John (a schooner) commanded by Lieutenant Hill, the sloop Chaleur, Thomas Langhorne, captain and purser, the Maidstone, a frigate, carrying twenty-eight nine-pounders, and commanded by Captain Charles Antrobus, and the Cygnet (always written Cignet) under Captain Charles Leslie in 1765-6, who was succeeded by Captain Duvill in 1768. These vessels were early stationed here. The Garland took in a small supply of

provisions in Newport harbor, August, 1767, and shortly sailed up the sound. It was expected that she would winter here; but a letter from Boston, under date of November 4th, states that she had been ordered home. The ship *Senigal* and the cutter *St. John* wintered here in 1767. The *Senigal* was commanded by Thomas Cookson in 1768, and by Thomas Rich, in 1769. The *Sultana*, Captain Ingles, was here for a short time in December, 1770.

The earliest demands that I have are those of Captain Richard Smith, of the *Squirrel*, May 19 and August 20, 1764. With these there are the receipts of the signing officers, John Bell, Jr., being the purser, for provisions from June 30th to September 30th. The *Squirrel* had been ordered to this station by Lord Colville in the autumn of 1763, "for the encouragement of fair trade by the prevention of smuggling." The *Maidstone*, Captain Antrobus, made demand for provisions in Newport, July 1765. On the 19th of the following September she was in Halifax. December 31st, the same year, she was again in Newport, when further calls were made for provisions, and also in March, June and July of 1766. These demands were usually made by Jno. Williams, Purser. The *Maidstone* was ordered home the same year, and sailed for London July 8th. The cutter *St. John* was a thorn in the flesh to Rhode Islanders. She was in these waters as early as 1764, but there is no record of her in the victualing papers earlier than 1768. She was commanded by Captain Thomas Hill, son of Dr. Hill, of London. He was his own purser, and not only caused a great deal of trouble to the commercial interests, but also ruled it with the contractor's agents with a high hand. Being his own purser it rested with him to sign his own vouchers. How he availed himself of the opportunity this afforded him to promote his own interest, may be gathered from the following extract from a letter dated at Newport:

"Captain Hill has made a demand upon me for fresh beef. I have let him have two quarters. I mentioned his supplying himself; his answer was, he has no money to do it, besides, he



shall make a demand in such for four months' beef, pork, butter, bread, &c. If you dont supply it he must draw on the Navy Board for it and charge to y'r acct. As to the beer affair, he will not give it up as long as he was victualed for. He has a right to brew, and at the expiration thereof he shall make a demand for four months' more of such articles as he thinks proper, leaving out the rum, which you must deliver, and he will sail immediaetly where he can brew by his instructions. Upon the whole he seems to be far from wanting to be unreasonably troublesome, and finally is willing to do this—to take of you 1500 or 2000 lbs. of bread, 5 or 6 barrels of beef and pork, 5 firkins of butter, change the fresh beef into salt, and barter for some oatmeal and pease, and will give you a voucher for near five hundred gallons of rum, you allowing him two shillings sterling for each gallon."

The difference in exchange was a fruitful cause of many disputes. The agents were required by the contract to cash the bills of officers for necessary money, which was paid in New England currency and not in sterling. This created great dissatisfaction. The grievance dated back to the time when ships were first sent to the American coast. In 1761 it resulted in the following correspondence :

"HALIFAX, 16th February, 1761.

"MY LORD. Frequent controversies have arisen between the Pursers of and the agents for victualing his Majesty's ships at this place, and a dispute now subsists on the following article of the victualing contract, viz.: 'And I do further oblige myself, that on application being made to me or my agent by the Pursers of his Majesty's ships or vessels, to supply them with necessary money for their bills in sterling on said commissioners at thirty days sight &c.'

"The pursers explain it in their own favor, so far as to insist that by it the contractor is bound to pay them sterling money for their bills, without regard to the currency or rate of exchange in this Province ; the agents, on the other hand, alledge that it is incumbent on them to pay the Pursers at the current exchange of bills in London, and no more : It has heretofore been determined in favor of the latter by every commanding officer to whom the same has been referred ; and the gentlemen who now insist so strenuously on that point, I think do either quite mistake or willfully pervert the meaning of the words, for they imply no more than that the bills shall be drawn in sterling money.



“At the present rate of exchange, which, within three months past, has arisen from five to seven and a half and eight per cent premium, I should have no manner of objection to pay them sterling for sterling and be a gainer thereby, but as no such thing is stipulated in the contract, I must industriously avoid giving up such a point, and thereby establish a precedent which may prove disadvantageous in future, when exchange is fluctuating in all countries, and none more than this, may probably fall back to its former standard of 5 per cent and under. Therefore I shall endeavor to demonstrate that the Pursers have no manner of right to complain of the present exchange, which I am now ready and willing to pay them on their necessary bills.

“It is a fact well known that for many years past, and at present, the lowest price of silver is and has been five shillings and four pence per ounce, that a Spanish dollar is or ought to be seven-eight parts of an ounce; and is intrinsically worth  $\frac{4}{8}$  in London. All his Majesty’s officers, troops and servants abroad are paid at that rate, and I do not see nor can believe that it was ever intended, or that any provision has been made for paying his Pursers in particular, in any other manner.

“When I am called upon for necessary money, on a Purser’s bill for £100 stg. I will tender him the highest exchange I get for my own bills, or have ever yet been given for any bills in this province, being 8 per cent, or 432 Spanish dollars for his bill of £100, which at  $\frac{4}{8}$  each is £100.16, so that instead of being sufferers by the exchange, I think it will appear from the foregoing calculation that they gain sixteen shillings on every hundred pounds sterling. If they will not be convinced of this they are at liberty to protest, as they have menaced, against the contractor for non-performance, and appeal to the Commissioners for victualing, who are certainly the proper judges of their own contract (or to any other board in England they please), and if I am found delinquent let them exact the penalty.

“I am sorry to give your lordship this trouble, but am under a necessity of doing it or giving up my right. As I avoid entering into litigious debates or altercations in your lordships presence, I take this method of stating in writing, and submit it with all deference and respect to your better judgment, having the honor to be, &c.”

To the above Lord Colville made answer :

“SIR. What you have wrote to me about the exchange and value of money is, I think, as clear as anything can be on the subject. I undersand your quotation from the victualing contract exactly as you do ; and if the Pursers refuse their necessary money on the terms you offer to them, I am clearly of opin-

ion that no breach of contract can be imputed to you on that account. I am, &c.

COLVILLE.

To ALEXANDER GRANT, Esq.

HALIFAX, 16th Feb'y, 1761."

The matter was then carried before the Commissioners who confirmed the decisions of Lord Colville. But it was not allowed to rest here, for the Pursers from time to time revived it, and in 1773 the action of some of the officers of the fleet called forth the following letter :

VICTUALING OFFICE, 22d Nov., 1773.

"SIR. We received your letters of the 1st past and 1st instant, with extracts of one from your agent in Boston relating to a dispute which he represents has happened between him and the Pursers of his Majesty's ships on that station, touching necessary money. And agreeable to your desire we herewith send you copy of a letter from the late Sir Alexander Grant's agent at Halifax to Lord Colville, of the 16th of February 1761, upon the like subject ; also a copy of his lordship's answer to it, and a copy of our letter to Sir Alexander Grant in consequence thereof. We are, sir, your most H<sup>ble</sup> servants

JAMES WALLACE.

THOS. COLBY.

ROBERT PETT.

MR. ROBERT GRANT."

It was the petty annoyances that he was subjected to, and the superciliousness of the men he had to deal with, quite as much as his ill health, which led the contractor's Boston agent, Powell, to resign ; for he states in one of his letters referring to this matter, that, aside from the annoyance of having the officers in his house at times when it was often inconvenient to his family, he had no mind to turn butcher—alluding to the constant and heavy demand for fresh beef, which made it necessary for the contractor to scour the country for droves of cattle, which had to be brought in, slaughtered and served to the ships in the different harbors.

There was a regular stereotype form in which all demands for provisions were made ; the blanks were printed in Boston and were furnished to the agents, who in turn gave copies to the officers of the ships when they came on the station. When provisions were wanted the blanks were filled by the purser,

and the order was then signed by the commanding officer of the vessel, the master and the boatswain. When the order was filled and the articles were on board, the purser receipted for them; and, to complete the transaction, the agent had to make oath before a Justice of the Peace, that the articles had actually been delivered on board said vessel, as set forth, that he had not feed the purser, nor had he given money in lieu of the said provisions.

The requisitions, the orders and the receipts were as follows, taking one ship, the *Rose*, as an example:

“We the signing Officers of his Majesty’s ship, the *Rose*, do hereby certify that there is wanting for the refreshment of her Company, a Proportion of Fresh Beef, for one Beef Day and one Pork Day in each Week, during her stay in Port. Given under our Hands and dated on board the said Ship at Newport, this 22d day of July 1775.

JAS. WALLACE, *Captain*.

SAVAGE GARDNER, *Master*.

JAMES THOMPSON, *Boatswain*.

To MR. CHRISTOPHER CHAMPLIN, agent to the contractor for supplying his Majesty’s ships and vessels with Fresh Beef at Newport.

SIR, You are hereby required and directed to furnish His Majesty’s Ship, the *Rose*, under my command, with a Proportion of Fresh Beef for one Beef Day, and one Pork Day in each Week, during her stay in Port, the same being actually wanted for the Refreshment of her Company. Given under my Hand, and dated on board the said Ship at Newport, this 22d day of July, 1775.

JAS. WALLACE, *Captain*.

“Received of Mr. Christopher Champlin, agent to the contractor for supplying His Majesty’s Ships and vessels at Newport, Rhode Island, with Fresh Beef, between the 22d day of July, 1775, and the 30th day of September, 1775, six thousand and nine hundred and thirty-two pounds of Fresh Beef for the use of His Majesty’s Ship, the *Rose*, and all which said Beef was actually delivered on board in kind, and was in all respects good and fit for His Majesty’s Service, for which I have signed three receipts of this tenor and date. Given under my hand and dated on board the said ship at Newport, this 30th day of September, 1775.

PURSER, absent without leave.

And W. COLLIE, *Pursers steward*.

I Christopher Champlin do voluntarily make oath that Six Thousand Nine hundred and Thirty-two pounds of Fresh Beef, mentioned in the above receipt from Mr. William Lewis, Purser of His Majesty's Ship, the Rose, was actually delivered into the said ship's boat in kind, between the 22d day of July and the 30th day of September 1775, and that I neither have paid or given, or am to pay or give, the Purser or any other person or persons whatsoever, any Money, or other consideration whatsoever, in lieu of all or any part of the said Beef.

CHRIST. CHAMPLIN.

Sworn before me, MARTIN HOWARD, *Just'e Peace*.

We the signing Officers of His Majesty's Ship, the Rose, do hereby certify the Commissioners for Victualing His Majesty's Navy, that there was received on board the said ship in kind, between the 22d day of July and the 30th day of September 1775, Six Thousand nine hundred and thirty-two pounds of Fresh Beef, from Mr. Christopher Champlin, agent to the Contractor for supplying His Majesty's ships at Newport, Rhode Island therewith. That is to say, on the 22d day of July 1775 Fresh beef 684lbs. issued as Beef and Pork to 200 men. [and then follow the issue of each day to the 30th of September inclusive] And further, that all the said Beef was good and fit in all respects for His Majesty's Service, and that the particular Quantities thereof were furnished and delivered on board said ship, and issued for Beef or Beef-Pork, as is against each day above expressed, and that the number of men to which the said Beef is mentioned to be issued as above said, were actually borne and mustered on board the said ship, as is particularly against each day above expressed. Given under our hands, and dated on board the said ship at Newport Rhode Island, this 30th day of September 1775.

JAS. WALLACE, *Captain*.

SAVAGE GARDNER, *Master*.

JAM'S THOMPSON, *Boatswain*.

We the signing Officers of His Majesty's Ship, the Rose, Capt. James Wallace, commander, do hereby certify that there is a want of the following Provisions, viz: Bread, fourteen thousand seven hundred and seventy-two pounds; Beer, four thousand three hundred and twenty gallons; Rum, three hundred and sixty-one gallons; beef, one hundred and sixty-eight pieces; Pork, thirteen hundred and seventy pieces; Pease, forty-one bushels; Oatmeal, thirty-nine bushels; Butter, sixteen hundred and seventy-three pounds (for butter and cheese); Cheese, twenty-seven pounds; Vinegar, two hundred gallons. For the use of His Majesty's said ship to complete our Provisions to

three months. Given under our hands, and dated on board the said ship in Newport this 3d day of April 1775.

JAS. WALLACE, *Captain.*

SAVAGE GARDNER, *Master.*

JAM'S THOMPSON, *Boatswain."*

Here follows the order of the captain to the agent of the contractor, the receipt of the signing officers as above, and the certificate of the contractor's agent under oath.

Frequently it was necessary to send on shore for articles that were wanted immediately, in which case a written order was all that was necessary, it being understood that the articles so ordered would be included and make a part of the next general demand. When these minor orders were written by the commanding officer of a vessel of any size, they were always dignified and courteous. Even Wallace, who had made such an unfavorable impression, never forgot the dignity of his position. A missive from him of this kind reads thus :

ROSE, NEWPORT the 23d Sept. 1775.

"SR. Please to supply his Majesty's ship under my command with six hundred pounds of fresh beef. I am, sir,  
your Humb. obt. Servant,

JAS. WALLACE."

When the executive officer of a ship had to make a like demand, his note took the following shape :

ARETHUSA, AT NEWPORT, RHODE ISL'D.

30th March 1773.

"SIR. In the absence of Captain Hammond, I desire you will please to supply the Purser of his Majesty's ship Arethusa, with 15120lbs. of bread, for the use of the said ship.

I am sir, your obt. Humble Servant,

JAS. WATT, *Lieut.*

"To the contractor for victualing his Majesty's ships at Newport."

But when a call of this kind was made by a purser, it was as curt as it was clear and concise.

"A demand of provisions for the use of his Majesty's sloop Swan, Captain James Ayscough, Commander, in Rhode Island Harbor, 6th April, 1773.

400 pieces of beef.

600 " " pork.



16 bush. pease.  
20 bush. oatmeal.  
450 lbs. Butter.  
30 gals. Vinegar.  
200 gals. Rum.

JAMES BATES, *Purser.*"

The above is addressed to no one ; but the bearer of such a missive knew where to carry it.

It was not always an easy matter, in a place like Newport, to supply a sudden demand, where the quantities called for were so large, and provisions, the fresh beef excepted, had to be brought from other places. When the *Senigal*, a sloop of war, and the cutter *St. John*, wintered here in 1767, the salt beef and pork, oatmeal and pease were sent round from Boston, the bread was brought from Philadelphia, and the rum was obtained wherever it could be found.

In 1773 the number of vessels on this part of the coast was increased. February 13th of that year, Brymer wrote that his uncle and Chas. Lyell had each taken a third of the victualing contract, Mr. Grant retaining the other third ; and in a letter dated the 17th of the following May, he states :

"The *Tartar* is fully victualed for sea, and 'tis presumed destined for your port. Everything is kept so secret that there is no coming at the truth. \* \* \* I wish your Court was over and everything settled in an amicable way, which I hope and sincerely wish may be the case. The *Gibralta* is in harbor, and I presume will be detained till it is over, in order to carry home the proceedings. This to yourself, as it is only a bare presumption."

The "Court" above referred to was the one instituted to discover, if possible, who were concerned in burning the schooner *Gaspee*, on the 10th of the previous June. And here I may relate an interesting fact, of which, up to the present time, there has been no record, but of which there is ample evidence in the papers before me. It is well known that the *Gaspee* was burnt in June, 1772, as above stated, by a party of Rhode Islanders, chiefly residents of Providence, led by Abraham Whipple, who, later, was the first commodore of the



American navy. The next year there was another armed vessel in these waters, a brig, named *Gaspee*, but no mention has ever been made of her. The officers of the navy were greatly incensed at the act of rebellion on the part of Rhode Islanders, and that the *Gaspee* might not be forgotten, they gave her name to a vessel which had recently been brought into the service—a brig, commanded by Captain William Hunter. The evidence that there was such a brig is found in Captain Hunter's demands for provision. One of these demands is quite lengthy and I will only give a copy of the shortest.

GASPEE, RHODE ISLAND, 6th Oct. 1773.

SIR. Let the bearer have three hundred or four hundred weight of bread, for the use of his Majesty's brig under my command  
Yours, WILLIAM HUNTER.

There are three of these demands, one as above, one dated August 13, and one December 4, 1773. The latter calls for 2190 lbs. bread, 2160 gals. beer, 221 pieces of beef, 330 pieces of pork, 7 bush. pease, and 296 lbs. butter and cheese; all of which articles were delivered on board said brig *Gaspee*, as appears by the agent's acknowledgment before Martin Howard, Justice of the Peace.

The snow *Cruizer*, Captain Tyringham Howe, the ships *Mercury*, Captain Robert Kuley, *Arethusa*, Captain Andrew Snape Hamond, and *Lizard*, Captain Charles Inglis, sloop of war *Swan*, Captain James Ayscough, brig *Gaspee*, as above, and schooners *Halifax*, Captain Abraham Crespin, and *Magdalin*, Captain Henry Colins, were all here in 1773. To these vessels, between the 11th of February and the 10th of the following April, provisions were supplied in these quantities: Bread 76112 pounds; flour, 2622 pounds; beef, 2160 pieces; pork, 3300 pieces; pease, 152 bushels; oatmeal 147 bushels; Indian meal 216 bushels; butter, 6413 pounds; cheese, 280 pounds; vinegar, 192 gallons. From the 21st of September to the 4th of December, the *Cruiser*, *Gaspee* and *Magdalin* had the following articles served out to them; bread, 8597 pounds; flour, 1112 pounds; beer, 7560 gallons; beef, 336

pieces; pork, 990 pieces; pease, 28 bushels; oatmeal, 22 bushels; butter, 1047 pounds. The bread was divided very equally between these three vessels, although they were by no means of the same size. The Mercury and Lizard were twenty-eight gun frigates—the size of the Maidstone.

The Mercury left Rhode Island in August and arrived in Boston on the 15th of that month. Brymer at this time wrote to Newport; “There is no talk of any vessel being sent in the room of the Mercury, but the Kingfisher is to relieve the Swan and the Cruizer, who will soon be ordered to Halifax to char.” While cruising off Brest, in 1758, the Lizard fell in with the French corvettes Heroine and Duc d’Hanovre; the former escaped, but the latter, a vessel of fourteen guns, was captured. The Arethusa was a thirty-two gun frigate. In 1778, she fought the Belle Poule, a forty gun ship, close in under the French shore, when the latter vessel, working her way into a small bay, was towed into a place of safety. The same year the Maidstone, already referred to, then under command of Captain Gardner, closed with the French frigate Lion, off the Chesapeake, and after a severe fight of more than an hour, in which the Maidstone was a good deal cut up, the Lion struck her colors.

In 1774, there were but few ships of war in Newport Harbor, but even these were a continued source of trouble to Brymer and his agents. The question of the difference in exchange was again agitated. To the demands of this kind made upon him, Brymer wrote: “There can be no cavil about the Purser’s necessary bills, as Mr. Grant’s letter explains that they are to be paid at the current exchange, Lord Colville approves it, and the commissioners confirm Lord Colville’s approbation.” This was April 11, 1774. October 20th of that year he wrote: “The Rose, a twenty gun ship, winters with you and has sailed for your port. She is victualled till the last of December.” It has been stated that the Rose was here earlier—as early as 1770—and in an imperfect list of vessels on this station at that time her name appears. In the past

there has been but little that could be relied upon under this head, and what we have known has been gleaned, little by little, from the scanty materials within reach of the historian. It is not surprising that there has been some confusion in dates, or that the names of vessels, in some instances, have not been preserved to us. It is stated, as above, that the *Rose* sailed for Newport in October, 1774, and on the 12th of December, I find her name first mentioned in the books of the agent, where a demand of the Purser for necessary money is entered. From this date, up to the time when all intercourse between the ships and the shore was brought to a close, her name frequently appears. In these papers there are a score of documents, demands and receipts, signed by Captain James Wallace. Wallace was in command of this ship during the whole time that she was on this station, but in 1780 he was in command of the *Nonesuch*, a sixty-four gun frigate, in which vessel he chased a French fleet, under convoy of three frigates, and succeeded in capturing one of the latter—the *Belle Poule*, mounting thirty-two carriage guns. This was off Belle Isle.

In 1775 the ships here were the *Rose*, Captain James Wallace; *Glasgow*, Tyringham Howe (commander of the snow *Cruizer* in 1773), and *Hind*, Robert Boyle Nickols, lieutenant commander in the absence of the captain; sloop of war *Swan*, Captain James Ayscough; and schooners *Hope* and *Diana*. The *Rose* carried two hundred men, but at times that number was reduced to one hundred and thirty. The complement of the *Glasgow* was one hundred and thirty men, and of the *Hind* one hundred and sixty-five. There was great difficulty in getting crews on this station, and possibly the above figures are below the proper standard, but they represent the number of men who were provided for by the victualing agent.

As the times became more and more unsettled, and the breach between the two countries grew wider, there was less and less willingness to have anything to do with the ships; and it has been stated that so early as 1764, the agent was interfered with by the people—"was seized and forcibly pre-

vented from supplying the ship"—the *Maidstone*. Of this I can find no evidence. If anything of the kind had taken place there would certainly have been some reference to it—some allusion to so unpleasant a circumstance—in the letters, if not in the books, of the agent. But nothing of the kind can be found in his frequent letters to and from Brymer. The whole thing, probably, grew out of a statement in a letter from Captain Antrobus to Governor Ward, to which the latter replied :

"Of the other tumultuous proceedings mentioned in the close of your letter, I can recollect nothing at present, except your representation of Mr. Champlin's being surrounded by a mob, &c., upon which I must observe that if that gentleman had been insulted and forcibly prevented from supplying the King's ships with provisions, and had made application to me on the occasion, I should have immediately have given him all necessary aid, protection and assistance ; but as he never made any complaint to me; I conclude that he has received no injury, and that the behaviour of the persons concerned in the matter proceeded wholly from the resentment which they conceived, on the inhabitants of the town being impressed and detained on board the *Maidstone*, and not from any real design of distressing any of his Majesty's servants ; and the uninterrupted manner in which the ship has been since supplied, confirms me in the sentiment I then entertained of the matter."

That there was in 1774 a growing determination to have nothing to do with the ships, though it had not then taken shape, may be gathered from a letter of Captain Wallace to Admiral Graves, written December 12, immediately after his arrival. In this letter he gives an account of the seizure of the guns of Fort Island by the inhabitants, and his subsequent interview with the Governor.

"I then mentioned, if in the course of carrying on the King's service here I should ask assistance, whether I might expect it from him, or any others in the Government. He answered, as to himself he had no power, and in respect to any other part of the Government, I should meet with nothing but opposition and difficulty. So much for Governor Wanton."

The agent, himself, found it necessary to send in his resignation the next year, not for the above reason, but for others that were quite as potent :

“The impossibility of negotiating bills here in a short time, the total stopping of trade, with every resource for obtaining provisions from the neighboring colonies being cut off, it puts it out of my power to support the contract any longer, for want of ready money, &c., &c., therefore must require you will, as soon as possible, fall upon some expedient to exonerate me from the discharge of the same. Should our next news from London carry with it the appearance of no accommodation, bills could not be negotiated here for any discount; nay, am doubtful if could raise money on them at 10 per cent, and most people of means would quit the town, as many have.”

This was dated August 1, 1775.

The people had now reached a point where forbearance ceased to be a virtue, and they utterly refused to allow the ships to be provisioned longer. The consequence was, all the market boats and coasting vessels coming into the harbor with produce, were intercepted and robbed of everything on board. And to make the position of the inhabitants still more trying, Wallace threatened to turn his guns on the town. In this dilemma recourse was had to the General Assembly, which body was asked to sanction the supplying the ships with provisions, to save the place from destruction. The prayer was granted, with the understanding that the supplies were to be furnished by only one person, and Wallace was to keep his men on board ship. This was on the 16th of November, and the next day the following permit was given :

HEADQUARTERS, MIDDLETOWN, 17th Nov'r, 1775.

“GENTLEMEN. I have just received a copy of your letter to Capt. Wallace and his to you, bearing date ye 16th instant, and also your request of this day that ye said Wallace may have delivered to him seventeen barrels of pork and five ditto of Calivance, now in store of Mr. Christopher Champlin.

“Yon have my permission under ye care and direction of Sam'l Dyre Esq. to deliver to Capt. Wallace ye above seventeen barrels of pork and five ditto of Calivance.

Signed, ESECK HOPKINS, *B. Gen'l.*

To ye Worshipful Town Con'l  
of Newport.”

The above is a true copy of a paragraph of a letter from Eseck Hopkins Esq. to ye Town Council of Newport.

Witness my hand, Newp't, November 17th, 1775.

WM. CODDINGTON, *Council Clerk.*



Added to the above, under date of the 18th, there is a receipt from Dyer for the pork and calivance, which he engaged to deliver on board the *Rose* and obtain from Wallace the proper receipt. The last of the previous demands were dated September 30th—one for the *Rose* and the other for the *Swan*. Here there is a break, and it does not appear that the ships were further provisioned by the agents of Grant, or that they obtained any supplies in these waters after November 18th, except by force. The fear of being fired upon kept the inhabitants in a state of excitement, which feeling was heightened by the sight of blazing farm houses on the neighboring islands, and the hope was entertained, that if the ships could have their ordinary supply of fresh meat, the place might be spared. This led to the calling of another Town meeting, as will appear from the following letter :

NEWPORT, March 18th, 1776.

“SIR : As the General Assembly is called to meet at East Greenwich, the freemen of this Town have resolved that it is necessary a Committee should be appointed to attend the Assembly, to oppose any attempt which may be made to repeal the act allowing the Council to supply the ships of war in this harbor with beef and so forth, and have accordingly, from your known attachment to them as well as the common interest, appointed you one of that committee and make no doubt you will exert your influence in defeating any measure which may have a tendency to obstruct the supply, as the SALVATION of the Town absolutely depends upon a continuance thereof.

By order of the Town Meeting held  
this day, I am, sir, your most Humb. S<sup>v</sup>t.

WM. CODDINGTON, *Town Clerk*.

The back of the letter, with the name of the person to whom it was addressed, is missing ; but it matters little to whom this duty was assigned, for no hand could then turn the people from their purpose, and it was but a few weeks later, May 4th—two months before the Declaration of Independence—that Rhode Island threw off her allegiance to the British Crown. From that time to the end of the war there was nothing but hostilities to be looked for.





NICHOLAS EASTON VS. THE CITY OF NEWPORT.

By GEORGE C. MASON.

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## NICHOLAS EASTON VS. THE CITY OF NEWPORT. [1785]

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In 1785 the citizens of Newport were greatly surprised to find their right questioned to what was then, and is still, known as Easton's Pond, Marsh and Beach. A year or two prior to that date, Nicholas Easton, who had inherited the Easton farm in a direct line, laid claim to the pond, marsh and beach, as part and parcel of the land conveyed to the original Nicholas, by the freemen of Newport, at a meeting held February 5, 1644, for the distribution of the town lands undisposed of; and subsequently he forbade the taking away of sand, gravel and seaweed from the beach, without his knowledge and consent. But little attention was paid to this claim, till suit was brought by Easton against Giles Sanford, for trespass; and as this was to be a test case, the City of Newport agreed to defend it. Counsel was accordingly employed by both parties, and they gat them ready for the battle. Helme and Goodwin appeared for the Plaintiff, and Marchant and Channing for the Defendants.

The case was brought before the Court of Common Pleas, the third Monday in December, 1785, and was submitted, by a rule of Court, to Samuel Huntington, Governor of Connecticut, Richard Law, Esq., of New London, and Oliver Ellsworth, Esq., as referees.

The following April the referees met the parties by appointment, at the Court House in Newport, and for four days heard the testimony on both sides, and the arguments of opposing counsel.

By order of the Court, a plat of the beach was made, April 14, 1786, by Calcb Harris; and to get at the root of the whole matter, it was thought necessary to go back to the early distribution of land, at the time that the Island was first settled.

The spot where the settlement was made was at the east and north end of the island.

The following spring, their numbers having increased materially, some of the members removed to the southern and western side of the island and formed a new settlement. It was stated by counsel, in the course of the debate growing out of this suit, that the movement to the southern end of the island, was planned and led by Nicholas Easton, who gave the name of Newport to the new township. The island was called Rhode Island in 1644.

At the latter end of 1637-8, Mr. Coddington was elected leader of the little band, and Nicholas Easton, John Coggeshall and William Brenton were appointed elders.

In 1640 it was voted that the chief magistrate should be called Governor, and the next in rank Deputy Governor. At this time four members out of the two towns of Newport and Portsmouth, were chosen Assistants. The officers were William Coddington, Governor; William Brenton, Deputy Governor; Nicholas Easton, John Coggeshall, William Hutchinson and John Porter, Assistants. The next year, 1641, R. Harding was chosen in Mr. Easton's place, and William Baulston in place of Mr. Hutchinson. It was asserted at the trial of the suit, *Easton vs. Sanford*, that in 1640 Nicholas Easton was fined five shillings for a breach of order, and that the following year he was left out of office. The next year, 1642, he was again elected Assistant, and held the office till a Patent of Incorporation was obtained.

The land within the township was divided into plots—a plot to each proprietor. Nicholas Easton's portion is described as follows, in a paper signed by Joseph Terry, Town Clerk, December 5, 1662:

“ Upon the 5th day of February, 1644, the old Freemen of the Town of Newport were called together for the disposition and ordering of the Town lands undisposed of, and by computation finding not above sixty acres, they jointly did agree that in regard the Town was indebted to Nicholas Easton, that he

should have that parcel unto him and his heirs, in part of satisfaction of the debt, at two shillings per acre, according to custom.

“To Mr. Nicholas Easton we appoint his farm to begin on the East side of the Mill Pond, in the middle of the Valley, and so, in a straight line, to extend Eastward to the marked tree at Stony River, and by that river side to the falls, and from thence by the verge of the hill to the sea, to the edge of the rocks, and so, bounded by the sea south and west to the middle of the hill, between the issuing out of the Pond and the Cartway, and from thence about by the pond side to the aforesaid valley : likewise on the southwest side of the Pond, bounded by the highway on the back side, to over against the house, and so, by marked trees, unto a small tree over against Mr. Brenton’s line, and by that line through the swamp unto the verge of the Pond, a part of Mr. Brenton’s marsh intervening, as also two acres of pasture and one cows hay, near Aqueduct Point ; with his house lot and six acres of upland and six acres of fencing copse lying between Mr. Bracey’s farm and Henry Bull’s meadows—all which parcels of land is laid forth for his proportion, 369 acres, allowed by order, with twenty also by order, allowed for the mill, in proportion of acres, more or less to him appointed.

“Whereas, according to certain orders, made for the establishing and giving assurance of the lands unto such who shall be therein observant, be it known, therefore, Mr. Nicholas Easton, having exhibited his bill, under the Treasurer’s hand, unto the session held the 10th day of March, 1640, wherein appears full satisfaction to be given for the number of 369 acres of land, more or less, lying within the precincts of such bounds as by the Committee by order appointed, to wit : to begin at the east side of the Mill Pond, in the middle of the valley, and so in a straight line to extend eastward to the marked tree at Stony River, and by that river-side to the falls, and from thence by the verge of the hill to the sea, at the bottom of the rocks, and so bounded by the sea, south and west, to the middle of the hill, between the issuing out of the Pond and the Cartway, and from thence along by the pondside to the aforesaid valley : likewise on the southwest side of the pond, bounded by the highway on the back side, to over against the house, and so by marked trees unto a small tree over against Mr. Brenton’s line, and by that line through the swamp unto the head of the Pond, a parcel of Mr. Brenton’s marsh intervening the Pond ; as also two acres of pasture and four acres of fencing copse, lying between Mr. Bracey’s farm and Henry Bull’s meadows—all which parcels of land, set forth for his portion ; these, therefore, doth evidence and testify that all these parcels of land aforementioned, amounting to the aforesaid number of 369 acres, and 20 allowed



by order from the town in payment for the mill, for his part : all which parcels of land amounting to the number of 389 acres, more or less, fully appropriated to the said Mr. Nicholas Easton and his heirs forever.

These are true copies, as attested

Jos. TERRY, *Town Clerk.* 1662 Decb 5.

With the above, abstracts of wills were read, showing how the property had subsequently been transmitted from generation to generation, till it had come into the hands of the plaintiff.

The will of the first Nicholas was dated 1675. He made his son John residuary legatee.

John, in his will, dated 1699, made his grandson, Peter, residuary.

Peter, in his will, dated 1721, gave to Nicholas all the marsh, to high water mark. This is the first conveyance of the marsh.

Nicholas, in his will, dated 1763, gave the farm to his sons, Nicholas and Jonathan ; and in 1767, in a partition deed, Jonathan gave Nicholas the marsh and beach to high water mark.

The will of Nicholas (the last will prior to the litigation, which will was drawn by Henry Marchant, one of the opposing counsel) makes no mention of either marsh or beach. This will is dated 1770.

Sundry leases of the beach were produced—one to——— Davis, 1739 ; one to——— Pike, 1768 ; and one to Joseph Southwick, 1772-3. And the following depositions were offered by the plaintiff :

“Samuel Dyre, of Newport, in the County of Newport, Esq. aged fifty-six years, being duly sworn, on his oath saith that in the life time of his late uncle, Samuel Dyre, deceased, he was often times sent by his said uncle, with whom he lived, for sand: but was always ordered by him to ask liberty of Nicholas Easton, Esq., uncle to the present Nicholas Easton, who gave it upon request. The deponent also saith, that since the decease of his said uncle, Samuel Dyre, he hath often times carted sand from the beach, called Easton’s Beach, to his own farm, but ever asked liberty. That, for about thirty five years past, he hath known and been familiarly acquainted with the farm called

Easton's Farm, in Newport, now in the tenure and occupation of the present Nicholas Easton, of Newport, together with the pond, beach and marsh thereto adjoining, while the same were severally in the tenure, occupation and improvement of Nicholas Easton, the uncle of the present Nicholas Easton, and the now Nicholas, and that, as well the beach and marsh as the upland, were included within the same enclosure and under the immediate improvement, as well of the said Nicholas the uncle, as the present Nicholas, and that the deponent's uncle, Samuel Dyre, deceased, was born in the year sixteen hundred and eighty-eight, as this deponent hath seen registered in a family bible, and now stands engraved on his tombstone.

Signed SAMUEL DYRE."

"James Coggeshall, of Newport, in the County of Newport, yeoman, one of the people called Quakers, being duly engaged, on his solemn affirmation, saith that he is seventy-five years of age, in February next, and when he was about ten years of age, he was used to ride with his father to old governor John Easton's, and had often passed over the beach, now in dispute between the town of Newport and Nicholas Easton, at which time there was a fence at the west end of the beach, with a gate for travellers to pass through, and that his father usually set him down to open the gate, and both beach and marsh were at that time enclosed; and since that time, in the life of Nicholas Easton, grandfather to the present Nicholas Easton, he well remembers a gate and fence kept erected at the east end of the beach, by a division between the late Peter Easton and the said Nicholas; and that, as well the beach and marsh, as the uplands, were included within the farm enclosure and under the immediate improvement of Nicholas Easton, the grandfather, and Nicholas Easton, the uncle of the present Nicholas Easton.

"Questions by the Committee of the town of Newport.

"Have you frequently known the inhabitants of the Town of Newport to fetch sand or seaweed from the Beach, in old Nicholas Easton's time?

"*Ans.* I have: but when I fetched sand I always asked leave.

"Have you any knowledge of a wharf built on the side of the beach, into the pond, and for what purpose?

"*Ans.* I remember a little sort of a scaffold, built for the fishermen to go wash their fish; but by what liberty I do not know. I saw it there.

"Did you know of a scow being kept in the pond?

"*Ans.* Yes, I think the Bliss's had a scow there.

"Did you ever see them load the scow with seaweed?

"*Ans.* I saw them load their carts, but not their scow. I heard tell of it.

"Did you know of a canal being cut from the beach into the pond, to let the salt water in?"

*Ans.* No: it was before my time.

"JAMES COGGESHALL."

"Joseph Arnold, of Newport, in the County of Newport, Esq., being duly sworn, on his oath saith that he was an inhabitant of Newport seventy years past, and at that time, and ever since that time, never remembers to have heard the Beach and Pond, which lay adjoining to Mr. Nicholas Easton's land, and in common with it, called by any other name than Easton's Beach, and Easton's Pond, until the dispute between Mr. Easton and some of the inhabitants of said Newport, and very well remember to have heard the people of Newport say, during that time, that they had been or were going to fish for perch in Easton's Pond; and in the winter season, that they had been or were going skating on Easton's Pond; and had often heard the inhabitants say they were going or had been to catch clams on Easton's Beach.

"Questions by the Committee:

"Have you lived any part of the time out of Newport?"

*Ans.* I lived in town here, was put to school here, and here continued to live, till I was grown up a young man, and then I went to Jamestown, and while I lived in Jamestown, I spent more than half my time in Newport, till I removed here with my family.

"When did you hear of any dispute between some of the inhabitants of Newport and Mr. Easton, about the Beach.

*Ans.* When the lawsuit was commenced between Nicholas Easton and Giles Sanford, and never heard of any dispute till that time.

"Question by Easton.

"Do you remember in my grandfather's days, as well as my uncle, that the cows and horses that were put to pasture upon his land, went down to feed upon the beach and marsh that lay in common with the upland adjoining?"

*Ans.* They did: for, from the gate by the street at John Easton's corner, there was a driftway to the Beach open, and nothing to stop them.

"JOSIAH ARNOLD."

These depositions were all properly acknowledged before a justice of the peace.

It was further claimed by the plaintiff, that if the right to the beach had not been conveyed to the original Nicholas, it was still in the original proprietors, and the town must fail: that immemorial usage could not affect the freehold: that if

acts had been passed regulating the fishing in the pond, the same applied to almost every pond in the state: that in sundry papers the land in dispute was called Easton's Beach, that the proprietors' rights were distinct from the rights of the freemen at large: that old Nicholas Easton, and afterwards his son, were governors, and therefore could not be supposed to have arrogated rights they never had, and the question was asked—"would Jonathan Easton have been continued governor, if he had willed away the town rights?" Jonathan Easton, it was asserted, must have known his father's rights, and as he conveyed the beach, it must be taken for granted he had a right.

These were the leading arguments of the plaintiff's counsel, who gave in the course of debate, a history of old religious controversies (no minutes, unfortunately, of this part of the debate have been preserved) and they explained the want of consistency on the part of the last Nicholas, in sometimes claiming and at other times relinquishing the right to the pond, marsh and beach, by asserting that at such times he had been governed by party considerations.

The defendants took up the act of incorporation, the distribution of lands to the original proprietors, and the laying out of highways. It was declared that the beach had never been conveyed or disposed of, but had ever remained a commonage, the same as the freemen held Fort Island, Coasters Harbor (written Coarse Harbor) and the Powder House—that the rights of corporations cannot be lost by possession or continued claims of others, and that the argument that Jonathan Easton would not have been continued as governor if he had willed away the town rights, was absurd: for his will could not be known till he was dead, and, as the counsel pertinently remarked, "it would have been curious indeed to have chosen him governor after his death, or to have turned him out."

It was further shown that Nicholas Easton petitioned for the right to put up a gate on land now claimed to be the property of the plaintiff, as follows:

“At a quarterly meeting of the Freemen of the Town of Newport, Jany. 29, 1706; the governor chosen moderator—

“Whereas, there was a petition presented to this quarterly meeting by Capt. N. Easton that he might have liberty granted him and his heirs forever, to hang and maintain a gate across the way leading to Settnest Beach; the meeting, debating the matter, think it not convenient to grant it to him and his heirs forever; but, upon further consideration, it is voted and ordered that the petition be granted for seven years from the date hereof.

“P. BARKER, *Clerk.*”

And it was further shown that in 1716, Stephen, Peter and Nicholas Easton asked permission to open the Creek, they agreeing, should the petition be granted, to build and maintain a bridge across the Creek at their own expense, as herein set forth.

“To the Honorable Moderator and the rest of the Freemen of the Town of New Port, at a quarterly meeting held for said town the 25th April, 1716. the petition of us the subscribers humbly sheweth to this meeting:

“That whereas, there is a place in this Town, commonly called Easton’s Pond, and a river passing out of said Pond, through said Beach, into the main sea, in which river several sorts of small fish come in and out of the sea into said Pond, and repass again, and so, being sometimes beneficial for the town by catching of them; but sometimes the river is shallow and sometimes shut up for a long time, so that it keeps the fish from passing in and out of the Pond, and by that means is a damage to the Inhabitants. Now your petitioners are desirous that you will encourage fishing in the Pond by granting liberty to us that we may cut a passage or let out a river out of said Pond through said Beach into the main sea at the hither end of said Beach, which we believe will draw in the fish into said Pond. And if this meeting see cause to grant us our request to cut or dig a river through said Beach, we, your petitioners, will build a bridge over said river, at our cost, oblige ourselves to maintain it and keep it in good repair, so long as we may keep said river open when made, and if filled up, to fill up the channel that they shall dig, and for which favor and liberty to your petitioners, if granted, as in duty bound will ever pray.

“Signed by us

“STEPHEN EASTON,  
“NICHOLAS EASTON,  
“PETER EASTON.



"At a Quarterly Meeting, April 25, 1716, the foregoing petition is allowed upon the above conditions, to be fulfilled, and was voted in Quarterly Meeting.

"W. CODDINGTON, T. C."

It was also shown that fishing in the pond was regulated by an act in 1713: that by a vote horses were not allowed to stray on the commons and that the citizens held the freehold to the beach as tenants in common: that in the conveyance to the original Nicholas no mention is made of the beach, either in the original grant or in the disposition of the remaining sixty acres, for the proprietors did not consider the beach as land to be conveyed: that the conveyance of the marsh by Peter, in his will, was no evidence of ownership, and that in no papers but those of the claimant is the beach called Easton's Beach.

Witnesses were called—Bliss P. Peckham and William Weeden—as to the boundaries and the uninterrupted use of the beach by all the inhabitants, and the following depositions were read:

"I Caleb Gardner, of Providence in the county of Providence, Esq., being engaged according to law do testify and say that about forty years ago my father filled and completed the wharf in Newport, now owned by Mr. William Langley, with gravel and sand brought from Easton's Beach, so called, and ever afterwards repaired said wharf with gravel from said Beach; and further say, that I have frequently brought sand from said Beach, have known Mr. Jacob Barney, Senior, to bring kelp from said Beach, almost every year while I resided at said Newport. I also know that my late brother-in-law, Benjamin Sherburne, deceased, brought large quantities of gravel and sand from the said Beach, and that the inhabitants of Newport in general, while I resided there, brought the principal part of the gravel and sand they made use of from the Beach aforesaid, during all of which time I never knew or heard of any of the Easton family laying any claim to the fee of the said Beach, excepting the present Nicholas Easton, since his uncle's death or that any person was interrupted in bringing any thing off the said Beach, but always understood and supposed that the said Beach belonged to the town of Newport.

"CALEB GARDNER."

"The deposition of Joseph Peckham, of Middletown, in the county of Newport, and state of Rhode Island, of lawful age, in his solemn engagement testifieth and saith that he the depo-



nent used to cart seaweed from the Town Beach in Newport without any molestation, for a number of years, and that he always understood that the said Beach was the property of the Town of Newport. Moreover, the deponent saith that when he used to cart from there, that old Mr. Nicholas Easton was so far from being disturbed at it, that he, the deponent used to leave his cart and utensils at the old gentleman's, and always found them in good order. And many others, and indeed everybody that chose to cart sand, seaweed and any thing else from said beach, without any molestation. The deponent further saith that he and others did cart since the death of old Esqr. Easton without any hindrance from the present Nicholas Easton : further the deponent saith not.

“JOSEPH PECKHAM.”

“Questions by Nicholas Easton's Attorney.

“Did you ever ask my Brother Nicholas' leave to cart seaweed from said Beach?

“Ans. Yes, but I never carted afterwards.

“Quest. Did my brother Nicholas grant you liberty?

“Ans. Yes.

“Quest. Did you never ask leave of old Esqr. Easton ?

“Ans. No, for I never heard that he laid any claim to it ?

“Quest. Did you ever know any inhabitant of the Town of Newport to mow or improve any part of the Salt Marsh, now in the possession of the present Nicholas Easton ?

“Ans. No.

“Quest. Did you ever hear of any contention between Thomas Hassard, tenant to the late Nicholas Easton, Esq. and some of the inhabitants of the town of Newport, about carting sand and gravel and seaweed off from the Beach aforesaid ?

“Ans. No.

“Questions by the Committee.

“Can you remember how much that salt marsh, heretofore mentioned, has increased for thirty or forty years past ?

“Ans. No.

“Quest. Don't you remember a wharf on the Pond side ?

“Ans. Yes, very well.

“Quest. What use was made of that wharf ?

“Ans. To scow seaweed across the Pond.

“Quest. By whom was the seaweed scowed.

“Ans. By any body that found it convenient.

“Quest. Do you mean the Inhabitants of Newport ?

“Ans. Yes, a number of them used it.

“Questions asked by the present Nicholas Easton's Attorney.

“Do you remember how long it is since that wharf was erected ?

*Ans.* I do not justly remember the time.

*Quest.* Do you remember whether it was by the consent of the late Nicholas Easton, Esq., or by the present Nicholas Easton ?

*Ans.* I don't suppose it was by the consent of any body, for I always understood the said beach to belong to the town ?

“JOSEPH PECKHAM.”

Other depositions, of a like tenor were read, and I found with these papers the following letter, which is not out of place here :

“SIR. It can do no injury to the cause depend'g between Easton and the Corporation, to notice to the Gentlemen referees that every house built in the Town, from the first settlement to ye present time, was with sand from the Beach, and many of them was supplied with shells for the lime ; besides, many of our streets and yards are paved with gravel from thence for more than a century back. Fishermen have taken and cured, I may venture to affirm, near 1000 bbls. upon an average, for 50 years past, together with the immense quantities of sea-weed and sand for manure, all taken and brought off without (in a single instance) even asking any of the Easton family's permission. All the advantage they ever derived from this business was in common with other teamsters. Those were no doubt employed that worked ye cheapest. These thoughts have occurred to me this even'g ; perhaps all of them may not have been taken up by you.

I am most respectfully  
Yr H'ble Servt,

Sunday Even'g 23d Apl.

W. VERNON.”

H. MARCHANT Esq.<sup>1</sup>

The case was finally left with the Referees, and they reported as follows :

“To the Honorable Court of Common Pleas next to be holden at Providence, within and for the County of Providence.

“The Subscribers, to whom was submitted and referred by a rule of your honors, at your session holden at Providence, within and for the County of Providence, on the 3d Monday of

(1)In this letter we find what is probably the gist of the whole thing. The sea yielded an unlimited supply of fish, for which there was always a great demand, particularly for the W. I. trade. Easton daily saw the fishermen landing and curing large quantities of fish on the Beach, and he first coveted and then grasped at the revenue the Beach yielded to the citizens generally. The citizens failed to recognize his claim, hence the suit to establish what he deemed his right.

Decem'r 1785, a case and controversy subsisting between Nicholas Easton of the City of Newport on one part and the said City on the other, respecting a certain Beach, Marsh and Pond adjacent, all lying in the City aforesaid.

"Report that we met the said parties, at the Court house in said City of Newport, on the 21st day of instant April, and on said day, the 22d, 24th, and 25th of said month, proceeding from day to day by adjournment, fully heard them, with their evidence and counsel, on said matters of submission, and viewed the premises.

"That it appears to us that the late Town, now City of Newport, under a purchase of the native right and a confirmation by the General Assembly of this State, became seized in fee of the disputed premises, together with an extensive tract of land adjacent. That no grant or disposition appears ever to have been made of said Premises, by said Town or City to any person or persons to hold in severalty; and from their nature and locality it was highly proper that they should be reserved for common use.

"That they appear to have been included in land which the owners of said Town of Newport in 1641 did sequester for a perpetual commonage.—That the inhabitants of said Town have ever as they had occasion, until the present controversy arose, participated in the use of them, taking fish in the Pond, and gravel, sand, kelp &c from the Beach—It also appears that the said Nicholas Easton and those whose right he hath, being all inhabitants of said Town, now city, have from time to time claimed an exclusive right in fee to the said premises, and have ever participated in the use of them; but have not had such exclusive and adverse possession as to disseize said Town or City, or gain a title.

"Wherenpon we award and determine that the said disputed Premises, bounding South by the Sea, at low water, Easterly by the Westerly line of the Town of Middletown, from the Sea to the Northerly side of said Pond, and then round by said Pond Westerly and Southerly to the South Westerly corner of the same, from thence South 3 degrees East to the Sea (as the said last mentioned line is laid down in the plan taken by C. Harris, Surveyor taken by order of your Honors and herewith enclosed.) with all the privileges thereof ought to be and shall be and remain to the said City of Newport, for their common use forever—And we further award that the taxable Costs be paid equally by the parties.

"NEWPORT, April 26, 1786.

"SAMUEL HUNTINGTON	} <i>Referees.</i>
"RICHARD LAW	
"OLIVER ELLSWORTH	

The citizens had gained their point, and it would seem that, having established their rights, they were willing to concede something to the plaintiff, as appears by the following document, signed by counsel on both sides :

“In the case, Nicholas Easton *vs* Giles Sanford, before referees, it is agreed by the parties that the determination of the referees be extended to the Beach only, any clause or clauses in the rule to the contrary notwithstanding: and that any right or claim on either side to the Marsh and Pond be not affected hereafter by this agreement.

“NEWPORT, 22d Apl 1786.

“H. MARCHANT	}	<i>for the defendants.</i>
“WM CHANNING		
“J. M. VARNUM <sup>1</sup>	}	<i>for Easton.</i>
“H. GOODWIN		

At this point there is some discrepancy in the dates. The above agreement refers to the rule of the referees, but it antedates that instrument four days—a discrepancy that cannot now be explained.

Nicholas Easton did not sit down quietly by the rule of the referees, and after a time he picked a flaw in the rule, having discovered that the word “Bounds” appeared where it should read “Pond.” H. Marchant accordingly addressed a letter on the subject to one of the referees, and received the following reply :

NEW LONDON, Dec. 18, 1786.

“SIR.

Yours of the 30th Ultmo. pr. last Post, came not to Hand until yesterday, upon my Return home from Hartford—our Roads have been almost impassible, but shall transmit it by the first opportunity, to Govr. Huntington and Mr. Elsworth—however it is not probable they will be able to transmit you an answer by the time you mention—I well remember that there was that mistake of the word *Bounds* for *Pond* in the Rule produced. And that it was fully agreed by all the Parties concerned—that it was a mere Clerical Mistake, and was agreed to be rectified as such—and by the mutual Consent of all the parties and their Counsel—And that the *Beach* the *Marsh* and the *Pond*—were the three objects that were agreed by all the concerned to be the Subjects of our Enquiry and adjudication—and we accordingly were led by the Parties to take a Par-

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(1) Varnum took part in the suit, but was not engaged at the opening.

ticular View of each and adjudicated upon them accordingly.

And am Sir with high Esteem and Respect

Your most Obedt. humble Servt.

"RICHARD LAW."

HENRY MARCHANT, Esq.,  
Newport.

But the above did not suffice. Nicholas Easton had had a long and troublesome suit, and all that he had gained was the privilege of paying one-half the cost ; this with his temperament, was more than he could bear, and he continued to assert his claim exactly as he had done before. A meeting of the Freemen was therefore called, as appears by the following warrant :

"At a Meeting of the Freemen Agreeable to Adjournment, and also by Warrant—October 8th, 11 a. m. o'Clock, 1787.

Christopher Ellery appointed Moderator.

Whereas by the Report of the Referees appointed in the Action of Nicholas Easton, against Gyles Sandford in which this Town was admitted to defend the right of the Town to the Beach, Marsh and Pond within said Town, was established, and a judgment was entered thereon accordingly : And Whereas the said Nicholas notwithstanding said Report, Continues his Claim thereunto : Wherefore it is - - - -  
Unanimously Resolved, that Messieurs, Henry Bliss, George Champlin, George Sears, Daniel Mason, Peleg Clarke, George Gibbs, Edward Simmons, Samuel Vernon ye 2d and John Topham or the Major part of them be a committee to maintain the right of said Town, to said Beach, Marsh and pond, in such a manner as shall most conduce to the Interests thereof : And this Meeting, placing the fullest confidence in said Committee, do authorize them to take such measures as they shall think proper for the preservation of the Town's Right to said premises. And all such their proceedings shall be as binding on the Town as if done in Virtue of Special orders from a Town Meeting. It is further Resolved, that said Committee be empowered to Contract with Counsel, and make them Reasonable allowances for their former and future services.

Newport, ye June 22d 1788

the foregoing is copied from the Book of Town Records, and Compared by

"PELEG BARKER, JUNR, *Town Clk.*"

The committee so appointed obtained the following certificate from the referees.

"These may Certify. That in the Case of Easton with the City of Newport, which was referred to us the Subscribers—



according to our best recollection—when the Cause came on before us and the Files read it appeared that the word *Bound* was written in the Submission, instead of the word—*Pond*, which was then by all the Parties concerned agreed to be a meer clerical mistake—and we were desired and directed by them to consider it as such—and accordingly we heard the Parties, relative to the Medow, Beach and Pond—as the three Subjects of Controversy—and were also directed by all the Parties to go and view the same and accordingly did so—and awarded relative to the same—as being within our Instructions—by the express agreement and consent of all concerned therein—as witness our hands. Dated in Connecticut the 16 day of Feby. 1787.

“SAML. HUNTINGTON, }  
 “RICHD. LAW, } *Referees.*  
 “OLIV. ELLSWORTH, }

Two days later the matter in suit was compromised as follows :

“Be it remembered that in the Case Nicholas Easton of Newport in the County of Newport Plt. *vs.* Giles Sanford of sd. Newport, Deft. Wherein the Town of Newport is admitted as Deft. It is agreed by the Parties that sd. Case be continued until the next term—and for the settling and compromising the same; and that the Parties may be at Peace and harmony—It is further agreed that the Town of Newport shall relinquish unto said Nicholas Easton his Heirs and Assigns forever all their right and title to all the Kelp, Coral, Rock weed and all other kinds of Sea Grass and weeds cast upon the shore, or any parts thereof, called Easton’s beach, together with an exclusive right for the said Nicholas to carry the same off.

“That the said Nicholas Easton shall relinquish his right to the Beach and Marsh Land, together with the Pond adjacent, to the sd. Town of Newport forever—saving to himself the free and uninterrupted right of the Shore of the Pond with the soil which shall be made thereto which do adjoin his Lands which are now uncontroverted—June 24h, 1788.—

“The Committee for the Town of Newport do agree to the above and engage to use their influence in the Town aforesd. that the same shall be carried into Execution, that the dispute aforesd. may be finally settled.

“GEO. CHAMPLIN,  
 “G. SEARS,  
 “PELEG CLARKE,  
 “JONATHAN EASTON, JR.,  
 “SAML. J. POTTER,  
 “R. J. HELME, }  
 “HENRY GOODWIN, } *Atts. for N. E.*”



Thus ended this long and vexatious suit as to the ownership of the Town on Easton's Beach. During the pending of the suit party feeling ran high, and it has been asserted that Easton's disappointment found vent in influencing the withdrawal of the Charter of the City of Newport and the return to a Town form of government.

## CORRECTIONS.

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Page 16, line 16, a note after the word *in*, should here supply the date 1633.

Page 22, line 5 of notes, for *ond*, read *and*.

Page 26, note 5, for *I*, read *II*.

Page 27, notes 4 and 5, for *I*, read *II*.

Page 29, last line of notes, for *twenty*, read *ten*.

Page 34, line 11, for *Portsmouth*, read *Portsmouth*.

Page 34, line 5 of notes, for *writteh*, read *written*.

Page 37, line 4 of notes, for *Procedings*, read *Proceedings*.

Page 40, line 13 of notes, for *Regiter*, read *Register*.

Page 51, line 3 from bottom, for *seen*, read *seem*.

Page 57, line 2 of notes, for *than* read *than*.

Page 71, line 2, for *knowlege*, read *knowledge*.

Page 72, line 3, a note after 1630, should supply the date 1630-1.

Page 79, line 4, for *Bu tit* read *But it*.

Page 88, line 3 from end of notes, for 1771, read 1781.

Page 120, line 5 from bottom, for *Provdience*, read *Providence*.

Page 125, note 4, for *Schoaler's*, read *Schouler's*.

Page 148, line 13, for *conunterfeited*, read *counterfeited*.

Page 164, note 3, omit *I*, before *Backus's*.

Page 169, line 16, for *fouud*, read *found*.

Page 169, line 18, for *Englishmen*, read *Englishman*.

Page 174, line 5 of notes, for *Treere*, read *There*.

Page 203, note 1, for *aslo*, read *also*.

Page 207, line 3 from bottom, for *martia*, read *martial*.

Page 251, line 15, for *successsul*, read *successful*.

Page 271, line 16, for 1776, read 1766.

Page 274, line 9, for *become*, read *became*.

Page 282, line 11 from bottom, for *Corberus*, read *Cerberus*.

Page 301, line 8 of notes, for *oppession*, read *oppression*.

Page 306, line 12, for *skaken*, read *shaken*.

Page 311, line 9 from bottom, for *earlist*, read *earliest*.

Page 313, line 1 of letter, for *controvsrsies*, read *controversies*.

Page 320, line 14 from bottom, for *Kuley*, read *Keeler*.

Page 320, line 10 from bottom, for *Colins*, read *Collins*.

Page 320, line 3 from bottom, for *Cruiser*, read *Cruizer*.

Page 322, line 15 from bottom, for *Nickols*, read *Nicholas*.

Page 334, line 5, a note should state that *Joseph* here occurs by mistake for *Jostah*.



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